



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



17416.40



HARVARD  
COLLEGE  
LIBRARY





---

**THE**  
**LETTERS**

**OF**

**MRS. ELIZABETH MONTAGU.**

---



THE  
**LETTERS**  
OF  
**MRS. ELIZABETH MONTAGU,**  
WITH SOME OF THE LETTERS OF HER  
**Correspondents.**

---

PUBLISHED BY  
**MATTHEW MONTAGU, ESQ, M.P.**

HER NEPHEW AND EXECUTOR.

---

**IN THREE VOLUMES.**

**VOL. II.**

---

**BOSTON :**  
**PUBLISHED BY WELLS AND LILLY.**

---

**1825.**



17416, 40



38.225-  
17.2

# MRS. MONTAGU'S LETTERS,

&c.

---

*To the Dutchesse of Portland.*

*Mount Morris, March 3, 1742.*

MADAM,

IF I had been ill when your Grace's letter came it would have cured me. I am infinitely obliged to you for your kind concern, but am sorry I awakened it by my remissness; my head had been aching very much for three days, that really I was unfit for any thing but an easy chair in the chimney corner. I was afraid of imparting my thoughts lest they should give you the head-ach or the cramp, but now I am quite well, and live in the hopes of seeing the light of your countenance very soon; when a few hours have run their stages they will bring me to you; but wishes have swifter wings than time, for they bring me to you every instant. An honest fisherman, in a play, says, the greatest evils of his life are hunger, thirst, and hope. I think I have not met with a better philosopher; hunger is a great evil to the poor, but it has its remedy; thirst too has its allay; but hope, the hunger of the

learned, and thirst of the rich, has no cure, no, nor no abatement. Hope is a vagrant that prefers begging from place to place, and gathering morsels, to living at home on fair means with content; it is a vagabond without an honest calling or an abiding place; it cheats us of the present good, and makes beggars of those fortune has made princes; what have we, who are here but for to-day, to do with the eternal promises for to-morrow? Get thee gone from me, thou restless guest, that cannot live with content upon possession! leave me content for my companion, and I will not ask thee to come as a flatterer; take fear along with thee, as fanciful a creature as thyself, who destroys what is real with a more painful deceit than thou buildest what is but imaginary; each are equally enemies to content. I have more compassion for those who fear to be miserable, than for such as are impatient to be happy; examples of misery are to be met with, but of absolute happiness none; such as have overcome those intruders of quiet, hope, and fear, are the nearest to happiness; they have reached content. I have spent some anxious hours since I parted with your Grace in fear, sometimes of not seeing you again for a twelvemonth, which gave me a heavy depression of heart; at other times, in a nearer hope of seeing you, I was in an impertinent elevation of spirits. Now, had expectation stood still and quiet, swift-footed time had brought the hour of our meeting. Oh that the soul could stay at home and mind its present business, and not go forth in fearful or fanciful prophecies concerning unknown matters! The folly of anticipation! Does not time fly fast enough, that our wishes must outrun it? Is it not powerful

enough that our hopes and fear must expect more than it performs? Is the progress of what consumes us too slow? Is the parent of age, the nurse of worlds, the teacher of all science, unable to do enough for us, and incapable to bring about our affairs! Shall that which lent leisure to the creation of light, and the reforming of chaos, not afford hours for the clearing a doubt, or settling an uncertainty? Shall this midwife to the works of infinity, and the birth of the universe, not bring forth a little accident? I find time to be trusted; it brings about all I would have it do, but that it goes an evener pace than desire; for the future I will rely upon it. Fear may add weight to my heart, or hope may give wings to my wishes, but they cannot impose delay or haste on Time; he goes on the same pace when Cæsar wants his assistance to conquer the world, or a child to ripen him a cherry; therefore how vain a thing is hope, and how wise a man is my fisherman! Those things determined I have nothing more to say, but that, whether tyrannised by fear, or deluded by hope, in every disposition of mind, every situation of circumstances, and in every point of time,

I am,  
with the greatest gratitude, and  
affection, and love,  
your Grace's  
much obliged, and faithful,  
E. ROBINSON.

*To Mrs. Donnellan.**Mount Morris, 1742.*

I most sincerely congratulate my dear friend on the recovery of Mr. Percival. I know that Mrs. Percival and you must have suffered extremely for one for whom you have so tender and just a regard. I hope this fear has not worn any traces of melancholy in your memory, but that you are in spirits and health. I cannot help writing to you, as I imagine you may be melancholy. I am no farther sunk in that abyss than dullness; if you can endure that, I will thank your patience and proceed; I come to you to ask for something to say. I want to know how the world goes on: we stand still here. Dulness, in the solemn garb of wisdom, wraps us in its gentle wing, and here we dream that others do ill, and happy are we that do nothing. One yawns there is peace in solitude; another stirs the fire, and cries how happy is liberty and independence; another takes a pinch of snuff, and praises leisure; another pulls a knotting shuttle out of their pockets, and commends a little innocent amusement; their neighbour, more laborious, making a lace with two bobbins, says business should be preferred to pleasure and diversions. How wise is every body by their own fire-side, and how happy every one in their own way! What glorious things do the ambitious say of ambition, and what mighty phrases do they adorn the giant with! How civilly do the indolent speak of idleness, and how prettily do the trifling express trifles; how cunning do those think themselves who live in cities, and how in-

nocent do they look upon themselves to be who dwell  
in the country; how crafty such as belong to court, how  
holy they that are of the church;

See some strange comfort through our lives attend,  
And pride bestow'd on all a common friend.

If we are apt to admire, 'tis from taste; if to despise,  
from our superiority; are we affectionate, 'tis from  
goodness; if indifferent, from philosophy; if we are  
lucky, what success attends on prudence; if unfortunate,  
blind chance does all. Self-love, the only honest flatterer,  
attends on our disgrace, and covers it with indulgent  
phrases that lean still toward our honour and praise; it  
dignifies our idleness and justifies our employments,  
makes our choice prudent, and all our means honest;  
but though we approve our manner of life, and "our  
kind of as it were" in the country, we have some cu-  
riosity after the actions of those who are employed in  
public affairs. By the votes of the Parliament, which  
we have sent down to us, there seems to be much cou-  
rage and firmness in the senators. I wish, now they  
seem an independent company, they may do some ser-  
vice to their country; when they are again enlisted  
under the banners of corruption and bribery, nothing is  
to be expected, for all ministers are alike; and all I ex-  
pect, is, to see those that lately have appeared as  
knaves, look like fools; those that have looked like  
fools, appear as knaves. I would the good precept, be-  
angry and sin not, were divided between the parties in  
power and out of it, that the first would not sin, and the  
second would not be angry; but between the wicked-  
ness of the powerful, and the wrath of the disappoint-

ed, there is no peace in Israel. I sent Mrs. Percival some cowslips to town by my second brother, for I would not again trust them with the carrier, who had kept them in his warehouse, where one canister was damaged by the damp so that I could not send it. And I was indeed ashamed to send such a small quantity, but the rest were spoiled by the man's carelessness. Have you music to your soul's content? I imagine to harmonious ears it must be a delightful entertainment, and I wish you much of it; it is wise to make the most of time we may, and let every hour comprehend the most of pleasure that it can. That delight which we do not pay with pain is ever worth seeking; every particular pleasure swells our account of happiness, and it is a false wisdom that pretends to despise pleasure. We might as well refuse to live, because we do not exist in the eternal and solid duration of time like the Supreme Being, as decline and despise pleasures because they are transient. What belongs to us that is not so? All is succession; fleeting time bears all away. Our fancies mount the wing and fly before our possessions vanish. Our wish obtained, desire goes on and leaves possession as a load behind. I suppose it is in musical entertainments as in life; first, an impatience for the overture and first entrance; then, no less for the opera; tired of that too, discontented at a want of harmony, and ill pleased with the catastrophe, we are glad to leave the theatre. Many people languish through life, as at the opera, from a want of taste; others, too delicate connoisseurs, are over exquisitely pained and pleased. Pain is as much worse than indifference as pleasure is better, so what temper to chuse would be

difficult if we had it in our power, but these things are beyond our power. Nature is the master that teaches tastes ; on him depends our disposition of mind, and as it leans we must bend.

I am, dear Madam, &c. &c.

E. ROBINSON.

---

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.*

SIR,

I CONGRATULATE you upon the safe delivery of Mrs. Freind, and the birth of your little daughter, whom I wished handsome for no reason but that she might bear an entire resemblance to her mother : however, one cannot judge at all of her beauty now. Cleopatra and Mother Shipton were bornequally handsome. I am glad you have a daughter, for as I am concerned for the honour of our sex, I take a pleasure and a pride in seeing them, as Providence designed them fairest and best of all God's creatures. But though they are by outward form most obliged to nature, in the inward fashion nature is ungratefully allowed no part. Affectation and absurd custom are often made their tutors, and their manners are all art. Dissimulation is looked upon by many fathers and mothers as an accomplishment, and ignorance as a merit ; and a woman is turned into the world to act by deceit or folly as either happens to prevail in her mind. I am sure you will give the little demoiselle an excellent education, and teach her it is much easier to be what one should be, than to seem what one is not, which is an œconomy of behaviour those observe who have the thirst of praise without the



taste of virtue. The love of praise is certainly a great incentive to virtue, but it is the misfortune of many women to place their vanity upon their beauty; and then it will not make one effort towards worthiness; therefore, it is of great consequence a girl should not look upon beauty as a meritorious thing, but only esteem it as a lucky accident to have her virtues written in fair characters. A book may be very tiresome, though the print may be fine, and the only advantage is, that the beauty of the letter may induce people to peruse it; but, when we have read it we give our judgment freely. I have often in company given my attention to a handsome woman whom I did not know, out of a strong prepossession that she must talk sense; and have been very angry that such a fine sign should afford bad entertainment. I would have wrote to you last post, but a violent cold had possessed me with such stupidity I was not able to do it. There is some conceit in mentioning dulness as accidental, but that degree of it which allays impertinence is very new to me. I think I never was more low-spirited than I was during the last two days, and I am not yet half well; when I mend you shall have a longer letter, at present it will be a favour to shorten this. I saw some fine jewels that are to adorn my fair enemy Mrs. S——: I beheld them without envy, and was proud to think that a woman who is thought worthy to wear seven thousand pounds to adorn her person, should do me the honour to envy and hate me. Her malice, more than my vanity, persuaded me there was some competition between us; but I will never attempt to outshine her in bought or borrowed lustre. Some of fortune's favours I may wish for, but

these gewgaws and trinkets I shall never covet. If superfluity were my portion, I hope I should rather make others happy than myself fine with it. Were fortune particularly kind to me, I should rather wish to justify her partiality than to be ostentatious, and surely of all vanities that of jewels is the most ridiculous. They do not even tend to the order of dress, beauty and cleanliness, for a woman is not a jot the handsomer or the cleaner for them. I do not mean to condemn Miss W—— in particular, for this; she has the best justifications vanity can have—beauty and riches. I speak only of the general taste. I should take it as an ill compliment of generosity to address itself to my vanity or extravagance, but it is thought a sign of love and esteem for a man to make himself uneasy in his circumstances, that his wife may glitter; an intimation from the first that mutual happiness is not the foundation of matrimony.

I am, Sir,  
your obedient humble servant,  
E. ROBINSON.

---

*To the Same.*

SIR,

WE had the pleasure of receiving your answer to our contradictory epistles, which were wrote in that empressement one feels for the concerns of a friend. The poor little man is held to this world by a weak thread of life which the fatal sisters will very shortly snip. I enquire after him continually, that you may be

early apprized of his departure. I wonder his victory over the terrestrial part should be so difficult; such a mighty and stirring spirit seems as if it could easily break through such a poor intrenchment. I am sorry for his decay, for he really made the best of bad materials, and carved both happiness and merit out of the worst stuff in the world. His bodily infirmities he supported with great cheerfulness, and the malady of his mind, his vanity, he turned to generosity; so that with the chief occasion of misery, sickness, and the first principle of self-love, vanity, he was both happy in himself and useful to others. I fear they who would bring good works out of humanity, must work them out of infirmities; for of natural goodness there is not enough for all purposes. Just here came in my mantua-maker to alter an old gown, and I have found how difficult a matter it is to hide a dirty spot in a plain ground; indeed she tells me if there was a full pattern it might be overlooked, or mistaken for a shade in the silk. Thus it is with our moral imperfections; they are hid in the variety of our actions, and escape observation by the intricacy of the design. At first we wear a fault as I did a spot on the sleeve, but when we perceive the world takes notice of it, we patch it with hypocrisy, and are not at the pains of taking it out, but put it under a plait; and quit the gay content of heedlessness for a wary state of cunning, and dress for the eyes of the world, though conscience knows we are in masquerade. I am sorry I cannot tell you any political news, but there is nothing of that kind stirring, that is of such authority, that one should think it worth repeating. The secret committee is composed of very

secret committee men; they say nothing. I was at the opera on Saturday night, where was all the world. I was very well diverted between the opera and the audience, or I ought rather to say the spectators; for they came to see, and not to hear. I heard that the elephant was the finest thing in the opera, but that was contradicted, and the burning of the temple was preferred to it. To accommodate every thing to the absurdity of the town, the dancing is rendered more ridiculous and grotesque than ever. I was thinking if the court of Augustus could have seen the polite part of our nation admiring a wooden elephant with two lamps stuck for eyes; and poor Scipio and Asdrubal could have risen to have seen themselves covered with silver spangles and quavering an Italian air, what an honest indignation and scorn would they have conceived at us? Scipio would be mightily pleased to see himself represented as the slave to a dimple, a poor creature made of song, silk, and civility. I think it is monstrous that these people should trifle thus with the names of great men. The amours of Narcissus and Echo, the harmonious strains of Nero, or the gentle manufacture of the soft spinning Sardanapalus, are proper subjects for operas; but heroes should not be exposed in an absurd light. It lessens the regard people should have for exalted virtue, and when a man has filled the large voice of fame with his great renown, is it not hard she should suffer his name to be squeaked in treble notes in such ridiculous memorial? Fame blows so many winds I wonder any should worship her with a constant devotion. Is it not better to be forgotten than to be remembered in the book of fol-

ly? When all men are wise general opinion will be worth something; but till then, let Monro prescribe to the love of fame. I am very sorry to hear Mrs. Freind recovers so slowly, my best wishes attend her, but if they had been of any use she would never have been sick; pray let me hear often how she does. My sister Pea is abroad; I am confined again by a little feverishness. I thought as it was a London fever it might be polite, so I carried it to the ridotto, court, and opera, but it grew perverse and stubborn, so I put it into a white hood and a double handkerchief, and kept it by the fire-side these three days, and it is better; indeed I hope it is worn out. On Saturday I intend to go to Goodman's Fields to see Garrick act Richard the Third, that I may get one cold from a regard to sense. I have sacrificed enough to folly in catching colds at the great puppet shows in town: if I have a rational constitution I shall not be the worse for my entertainment. Pea charged me with her compliments before she went out. We are infinitely obliged to you for your esteem, and will do, (what all will not do for esteem) endeavour to deserve it. I am glad you give me such a good account of my brother's health. Health is an excellent thing, but one may be tolerably happy without enjoying it for oneself, but we may be impatient for our friends, and anxious if they are not well; solicitude for them bears the fair name of tenderness, but when it is employed about our proper persons it grows contemptible; it then becomes our pride to disdain pain, as before in the other case we think it virtue to pity it. I had many compliments from Sir Thomas Robinson at the ridotto; he

seems happy in the thoughts of his government. I heard he was to make a Princess of Lady Bridget ———, but I hope there is nothing in the report, for Lady Bridget is not rich. What a fashionable exception have I made! and having passed over the objection of folly, have laid a prudent emphasis upon the want of riches. What an unreasonable letter is here! I will put an end to it; all happiness attend you and Mrs. Freind. May she give you every day the pleasure of seeing her recover health. Adieu; I am yours and Mrs. Friend's most sincere and obliged,

E. R.

P. S. I was obliged to keep my letter two days before I could get a frank to inclose it in: and now to send you all the news I hear, I must tell you advice is come this morning that Anson has taken three ships laden with silver, and is going to Chagre, and from thence to Panama. Vernon and Wentworth are to go with him, and Trelawney is to accompany them to reconcile their resolutions. The courtiers hinted among their threats in the House that the Parliament should be dissolved; the other side said, they that were in that inclination were betrayers of their country.

---

*To Miss S. Robinson.*

*Whitehall.*

MY DEAR SISTER,

I AM just going to the ridotto, so you may flatter yourself with the hopes of a short letter. I proposed writ-

ing to you this morning, but was prevented by company, and I have now taken up my pen to tell you that I am well. I have been so prudent lately as to refuse dancing ; see what serious lessons time teaches ! I was yesterday with Miss Kitty Knatchbull ; poor Sir Wyndham is truly afflicted. Some men, you see, still love their wives ; a little encouragement for us to venture. For my part, I only desire a man to love me all my life, whether it happens to be a long or a short lease of liking, I will give him his acquittance, and he may like what and whom he pleases afterwards ; but while I live he must be mine and only mine ; nay, he must guide his thoughts and looks to me, nor go so far as to like any one besides. Such were Prior's directions to his mistress, and if a man has not as much constancy, as I have delicacy upon this head, he may bestow his wandering affections elsewhere ; I am sure I should not value them. Mrs. Botham is at Elford with Lady Andover, which I am glad of, for poor Lydia has a taste for conversation above the hum-drum mediocrity of common understandings. Lord B—— has the gout at Bath, and is by that means detained there, to the sore mortification of the Countess, who would rather read the present page of life than study over Horace or Virgil. You have probably heard Mr. C—— mentioned as Miss M——'s lover ; but being by her rejected with all the pomp and pride of prudery, he sought one perhaps less fair, but more kind. The siege was not so tedious here, the lady not having the double ramparts of beauty and fortune ; she has however brought a large portion of gratitude and good humour, which must have compensated his loss. I suppose you have taken leave of balls

for some time; nothing but Orpheus's harp, which made trees dance, could make you a ball at Herton. My brother Tom takes the triumph of Mr. M——'s conversion to dancing, from your eyes, to give it to white stockings. Do such strange effects come from the ho-siers? His love is in its infancy, according to Prior, since it is now in his heels. Give my love to all at home.

My dearest Sister,

I am your's most affectionately,

E. ROBINSON.

*To the Same.*

*Whitehall.*

DEAR SISTER,

I HEARTILY congratulate you upon your joyful deliverance from dull company. It is a strange thing that while self-love is in all people apparently predominant, any one will prefer a stupid companion to the converse of their own imagination. Yet we sometimes see ingenious persons fond of the insipid, and court their society, rather than live in solitude. For my own part, I am so happily partial to myself, that if I find I am tired of myself, I think it so strong a symptom of dullness, that I am for the time discouraged from producing myself to others. There are many who enjoy a bodily life, and are never pleased but when they are moving from place to place. With them Alma is a mere machine, and just rules the laws of motion, but never finds the benefit of change. There are many people who ride



post through the world, and are always running upon a fool's errand. Others have a body as lazy and weak as their minds, and they sit still and pick straws, or play at cards, which they barbarously call killing time. I am going to the play to-night to see Mrs. Woffington act Sir Harry Wildair in the Constant Couple. My brother Matt comes to town to-morrow. I was yesterday at the Dutchess of Kent's, and I called at Mrs. Knight's; and after some more formal visits I returned home and read very quietly. You see how grave I am when not seduced; but that you may not think me in the vapours, I will own to you that I am to go to an assembly on Monday, the opera on Tuesday, with a long et cætera of gaiety. Lord George Bentinck has been extremely ill; I was very sorry, for he is one of the best natured men I ever saw in a family, and extremely polite and well bred to every body. One of the Trevors is to marry Doctor Alured Clarke; but there is no match like Miss Fane's; so much sense and merit will outshine all the diamonds in the mines, and there is real greatness too. They are both deserving, and I dare say will be extremely happy. I suppose I often send you news that you have heard before; but I would rather run the hazard of being impertinent, than that you should be ignorant. The Westminster election was declared void by a majority of four, to the great joy and triumph of the country party. Admiral Haddock is at Gibraltar with only thirteen ships, the French and Spaniards have forty-one, and they coop him up wondrous close. I imagine there will be a second edition of ghosts for Mr. Glover. There is a report (I led) that the new Czarina has put the

little Czar, the Great Dutchess, and the Duke of Brunswick to death. Ambition loves human sacrifice, and I think it is in all respects a cruel power. Its votaries must sacrifice their own ease and honesty, and often much more, to gain its favours: and when we have got the rich trifles and serious bagatelles of fortune, we must make anxiety their guard. Jealousy attends on power, avarice, and riches; much care is wanted to keep what we cannot enjoy. Most frequent is the fabled punishment of Ixion and Tantalus. The head that covets power is troubled with a restless giddiness, while grasping avarice is punished with eternal thirst. I had an excellent letter last week from C——. She has discovered a great deal of truth without one moment's study. There is a felicity of genius that despises opportunity and method; I should as little have expected moral reflections from her, as from the keeper of a raree-show, as she passes her life among the puppets and wax-work of the world. Reason can seldom find her disengaged, and as for reflection it can hardly catch her at home, and alone. What a friendship in Miss ——! I should sooner choose Greenland for my climate, than a friend of so frigid a heart and head.

I am, my dear sister,

Your's very affectionately,

E. ROBINSON.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.**Friday, Aug. 6, 1742.***DEAR MADAM,**

I RETURN your Grace a thousand thanks for your letter; the good wishes of a friend are of themselves a happiness, and believe me I have always thought myself the nearer being happy because I knew you wished me so. If your affection to me will last as long as my love and gratitude towards you, I think it will stay with me till the latest moment I shall have in this world; no alteration of circumstance, or length of time, can wear out my grateful remembrance of your favours to me; you have a station in my heart, from whence you cannot be driven while any one virtue lives in it; truth, constancy, gratitude, and every honest affection guard you there. Mr. Montagu desires me to make his compliments to my Lord Duke and your Grace, with many thanks for the favour his Grace designs him of a visit, which he is not willing to put off so long as our return from Yorkshire, but will be glad of the honour of seeing the Duke on Monday, at seven o'clock, in Dover Street; and I hope at that most happy hour to have the pleasure of seeing you. We shall spend that evening in town. If you will be at home to-morrow, at two o'clock, I will pass an hour with you; but pray send me word to Jermyn-street at eleven, whether I can come to you without meeting any person at Whitehall but the Duke; to every one else pray deny your dressing room. Mr. Freind will tell your Grace I behaved

magnanimously ; not one cowardly tear, I assure you, did I shed at the solemn altar, my mind was in no mirthful mood indeed. I have a great hope of happiness ; the world, as you say, speaks well of Mr. Montagu, and I have many obligations to him which must gain my particular esteem ; but such a change of life must furnish one with a thousand anxious thoughts. . Adieu, my dear Lady Dutchess, whatever I am, I must still be with gratitude, affection, and fidelity,  
 your's,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Mrs. Montagu.*

*Hildersham near Linton, August 17th, 1742.*

MADAM,

I SHOULD have paid my compliments earlier on the joyful occasion of your marriage, if I had known whither to address them ; for your brother's letter, which informed me, happened to lie several days at Cambridge before it came to my hands. My congratulation, however, though late, wants nothing of the warmth, with which the earliest was accompanied ; for I must beg leave to assure you, that I take a real part in the present joy of your family ; and feel a kind of paternal pleasure, from the good fortune of one, whose amiable qualities I have been a witness of, from her tenderest years, and to whom I have ever been wishing and omniating every thing that is good. I have always expected from your singular merit and accomplishments, that they would recommend you in proper time to an

advantageous and honourable match; and was assured from your prudence, that it would never suffer you to accept any which was not worthy of you; so that it gives me not only the greatest pleasure on your account, but a sort of pride also on my own, to see my expectations so fully answered, and my predictions of you so literally fulfilled. As all conjugal happiness is founded on mutual affection, cherished by good sense; so you have the fairest prospect of it now open before you, by your marriage with a gentleman, not only of figure and fortune, but of great knowledge and understanding; who values you not so much for the charms of your person, as the beauties of your mind, which will always give you the surest hold of him; as they will every day be gathering strength, whilst the other are daily losing it. But I should make a sad compliment to a blooming bride, if I meant to exclude her person from contributing any part to her nuptial happiness; that is far from my meaning, and yours, Madam, I am sure could not fail of having its full share in acquiring your husband's affection. What I would inculcate therefore is only this; that though beauty has the greatest force to conciliate affection, yet it cannot preserve it without the help of the mind; and whatever the perfections of the one may be, the accomplishments of the other will always be the more amiable; and in the married state especially, will be found after all, the most solid and lasting basis of domestic comfort. But I am using the privilege of my years, and instead of compliments, giving lessons to one who does not want them. I shall only add, therefore, my repeated wishes of all the joy that matrimony can give.

both to you and Mr. Montagu, to whose worthy character I am no stranger, though I have not the honour to be known to him in person, and am with a sincere respect,

Madam, your faithful friend,  
and obedient servant,  
CONYERS MIDDLETON.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

*Allerthorpe, Thursday 21st August, 1742.*

MADAM,

I do verily believe your Grace half condemns me for not having wrote before to you ; but I will give your curiosity ample satisfaction, and your indignation an entire pacification, before I have finished my letter. That I did not write upon the road is very accountable ; first, I was lazy, which is sometimes the case ; secondly, I was stupid, which I will not take upon me to say is not always the case ; but the truth is, I was dull without a zest of the pert or impertinent ; and so, thirdly and lastly, I said nothing, because I had nothing to say. On Tuesday I arrived at this place, not tired of my journey, but satisfied therewith. As far as Nottingham you will travel very soon, and then as far as Doncaster, therefore it will be but impertinent to give you an account of the road, or any thing concerning it. I will only tell your Grace I saw Nottingham castle, where there is beauty and magnificence worthy the wisdom and the riches of your ancestors. As we came nearer to this place the country grew more wild, but

not less beautiful ; we came through some rivers that charmed me beyond all things : whether they were once melting maids, or weeping lovers, I don't know ; but since the world is grown laborious those idle tales are forgotten which once were sung to the happy shepherd's oaten reed. I am surprized you do not fix a time for going into the country. I imagine you will spend your Christmas there ; but did ever any one go into the country above a hundred miles to gather snow-drops, or take a winter's blast ? We have at present very fine weather, the sun gilds every object, and I assure you it is the only fine thing we have here, for the house is old and not handsome ; it is very convenient, and the situation extremely pleasant ; we found the finest peaches, nectarines, and apricots, that I have ever eat ; your Grace will think I mean turnips, carrots, and parsnips ; but really and truly they are apricots, peaches, and nectarines. To-morrow, I believe, will be one of the happiest days I ever spent ; I am to go to fetch my brothers from school ; how delightful will be such a meeting after so many years separation ! I am glad Dupp remembers no more his labour and sorrow, for joy that a male child is born into the world : I think no man better deserves a child ; the end justifies the means, else what should one say for his extreme, surprizing, amazing fondness for the lady ? It is very indelicate to be so fond of all that composition of julep, jalap, pill, and bolus ; her breath must smell like a galipot of physic, and a box of salve, endearing charms to an apothecary, but un peu degoutant to a man of quality. "To bring such a slovenly corse betwixt the wind and his nobility !" I am glad there was a child ; but

pray was there not a little souterkin for the joy of the lady's relations? Pray is the Dupplinnetto so like his father as to talk to the first ear he meets? I imagine my lady will never suffer it to learn to walk, because that is too rude an exercise. I imagine, when it is eight years old, instead of going to Westminster School, it will be sent to Apothecaries' Hall, and there have its stomach improved till it is able to digest Album Græcum. I am glad Lord Dupp enjoys his liberty and leisure; the repose a gentleman takes after the honour of sending a son into the world, may be called ease with dignity. Mr. Montagu begs his compliments to your Grace and my Lord Duke; my sister desires the same.

I am his Grace's most obedient, and  
 ever my dear Lady Dutchess's  
 most obliged, faithful, and affectionate,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Allerthorpe, August the 24th, 1742.*

MADAM,

WHAT can your Grace be doing in town at this time, that you neglect the memory of departed Fidget? I know London cannot afford you at this time either business or diversion, and yet you write not; are you setting Chaos to rights, teaching Mr. Achard patience, or Lord Titchfield deliberation, or what mighty or impossible work have you undertaken, that you are thus cruelly engaged? I have got my three brothers with me, un très-bon mari, and a huge family to take care of, all



new acquisitions, and I write and your Grace replieth not, answereth not. You know I am so very a sister I cannot help talking of my brothers; I find them just as I would wish them, sensible, good-natured, and sober, and the most affectionate towards each other of any children of their age that ever I saw: they have very good characters at school, both as to their learning and behaviour; but the quintessence of perfection is my brother Jack. I had a letter from Mrs. Donnellan last post, who tells me, you will stay a fortnight longer in town, which I believe is not disagreeable to you, and verily a day in your house is better than ten thousand in the dwelling of the formal; you must bid adieu to that happiness that knows no hours, and the sweet liberty of pinning your ruffles at dinner-time, the valuable privilege of making every meal wait till it is cold, and the noble prerogative of having the coach wait at the door for two hours: all those difficulties of life which you now conquer like prudent Fabius by delay, you must encounter in haste; and in short your life, which hitherto has been the finest impromptu extant, must now be all readiness and compliance with the tyranny of time: the clock which for many years has been your most neglected slave, will now be your very punctual governor. Alas! that your Grace should ever be compelled to make use of your watch! I have wrote twice to you before I have once wrote to my congratulating correspondents; but to-morrow I shall begin to thank my well-wishers, who, I believe, are very good people, for I think their prayers have prevailed which they offered for my happiness. My friend C—— S——

is going to be married to Mr. B——, a man of great riches in prospect, and twelve hundred per annum in present: she is a very good young woman; the man is a little simple, but Miss S—— is not critical in understandings, and there is sense in twelve hundred a year, so I rejoice at the match, as I believe she will be very easy; happy is a choice word, and not to be profaned; however, if he is simple, she has good sense enough, and he has a tenacious prudence that will hold fast his estate: it must be irksome to submit to a fool; the service of a man of sense is perfect freedom; where the will is reasonable, obedience is a pleasure, but to run of a fool's errand all one's life is terrible. My best wishes ever wait on the little ones.

I am, dear Madam,  
your most obliged, and most grateful,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Mrs. Freind.*

*Allerthorpe, August the 27th.*

DEAR COUSIN,

I AM ashamed that I have not before answered your kind letter, and returned thanks for those good wishes of whose accomplishment I hope there is the fairest prospect; I think we increase in esteem without decaying in complaisance, and I hope we shall always remember Mr. Freind and the fifth of August with thankfulness. I am infinitely obliged to Mr. Freind for not letting the knot be tied by the hands of an ordinary bungler; he was very good in coming to London

on purpose, but he did not give his last benediction, but stole away before my sister or any of us were come down stairs. We arrived at this place after a journey of six days, through fine countries, where the riches of harvest promised luxury to the landlord, plenty to the farmer, and food to the labourer. Here we are situated in a fine country, and Mr. Montagu has the pleasure of calling many hundred pounds a year about his house his own, without any person's property interfering with it; I think it is the prettiest estate, and in the best order, I ever saw; large and beautiful meadows for riding or walking in, and all as neat as a garden, with a pretty river\* winding about them, upon which we shall sometimes go out in boats. In this parish Dr. Robinson, our general uncle, has founded a school, and an alms-house, where the young are taught industry, the old content: I propose to visit the alms-house, very soon. I saw the old women with the bucks upon their sleeves at church, and the sight gave me pleasure; heraldry does not always descend with such honour as when charity leads her by the hand. Our uncle did this good while he was alive; it was not that soulthrift that would save itself with another's money. I hope you will forgive my not having wrote to you before, but a new family, and a new place, must take up one's time. Our house here is tolerably convenient, and that is all that can be said for it: we have a better, which I hope you will often see in Berkshire. Pray, when you and Mr. Freind have a leisure hour, dispose of it in writing to me. Mr. Montagu has an

\* The Swale.

estate near Rokeby, from whence I intend to visit Sir Thomas Robinson's fine park, of which I hear great praises.

I am, dear Madam,  
your most affectionate cousin,  
and obedient humble servant,  
ELIZ. MONTAGU.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

Sept. 19, 1742.

MY DEAR LADY DUTCHESS,

THERE is a great pleasure in conversing with a friend in this manner, when the thought goes from my heart directly to your's, without passing through the ways of ceremony, or suffering the enquiry of curiosity. I have accordingly sent this by the way your Grace directed, that I might enquire into the real state of your mind, and discover the situation of mine. I assure you your letters to me, and mine to you, pass under no examination. My friend is above curiosity and suspicion of any sort, and is always pleased at my taking all opportunities of conversing with you after this or any other manner. He would gain a heart by generous and kind usage, but never confine one by severity and constraint; he is never better pleased than at any instance of affection that passes from me to my friends, or from them to me; and is entirely sensible of the happiness, honour, and advantage of your Grace's friendship to me. I hope you had my letter which I wrote to Welbeck, in which I took care to make you

but the second person, though in my thoughts you will ever be the first, even among the queens and princesses of the earth. I want to know how you go on, what you suffer from certain important nods and significant whispers, pretty embellishments of silence, or a pause in conversation, if a pause there can be where there is that most voluble orator. It is surprizing what nothingisms make a figure in polite conversations; repetition is a sign of emptiness, yet there are living echoes, where dwells sound without sense or invention. The nymph Echo, of old, was in love with Narcissus; the Narcissus's of these days are in love with Echo; fond to hear themselves say what others think for them.

I went last week, with my sister, to see Lord Ailesbury's place; nature has done much for it, but art has forborne her aid. I suppose the wild graces of Tanfield will be outdone by the improved beauties of Studley; but, for my part, I should prefer a belle sauvage to an accomplished court beauty. Our pleasures seem too much prepared and studied, but those we find in a mere natural scene appear accidental, and free from labour and contrivance, those enemies of surprize, and preparers of expectation, the great anticipator of human joy. Sir Miles Stapylton called to day, when I was preparing to write to you. Lady Stapylton is at Beaconsfield, by which I lose one of my best neighbours; I would that in the balance of fortune some of the worst were there.

I am, my dear Lady Dutchess, &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.**Allerthorpe, Oct. 2, 1742..***MY MOST DEAR FRIEND,**

LOVE is the fulfilling of the law ; you Grace orders me to write to you a sheet of quarto paper brimful ; behold, my inclination, exceeding your command, has chosen a folio. Most glad I am to lengthen out the time I may thus employ ; how few conversations are there wherein the head or the heart are interested ! If the country would afford a few reasonable companions, or burthen us with none that are not so, it would really make life a different thing ; but for me, who have not any sociable instinct, to lead me to creatures merely human, and, I think, scarce rational, it is really not a place of uninterrupted felicity. I do hourly thank my stars I am not married to a country squire, or a beau, for in the country all my pleasure is in my own fireside, and that only when it is not littered with queer creatures. One must receive visits and return them, such is the civil law of the nations ; and if you are not more happy in it in Nottinghamshire than I am in Yorkshire, I pity you most feelingly. In London, if one meets with impertinence and offence, one seeks entertainment and pleasure only, but here one commits wilful murder on the hours, and with premeditated malice to oneself becomes *felo de se* for whole days. For an antediluvian a dining visit was proportioned to the time he had to throw away, but for the juniors of Methusalem to be thus prodigal of life, is the way to be soon bankrupt of leisure and happiness. Could you but see all the good:

folks that visit my poor tabernacle; O, your Grace would pity and admire! You make complaints of a want of conversation; to your sighs I reply in murmurs. When may I hope for our meeting in London? Till you come, kings palaces and high places appear desolate. The Parliament, I hear, will meet on the 15th of November, but you did not use to come up till January—a barbarous and heathenish custom; though when I was passing time in the delights of Bullstrode I was of another opinion. Oh Bullstrode, Bullstrode! when I forget thee may my head and hand forget their cunning! A small loss perhaps you will think for the most unpolitic head, and the most unskilful hand in the world; but their little savoir faire is necessary. I hope to see Bullstrode again before my eyes grow dim with age, and, what is more presumptuous, to see the honour and ornaments of Bullstrode at Sandleford. Mr. William Robinson is just come, I must go down to him.

I am returned again to my dear Lady Dutchess; I stole from the company below stairs, after they had drunk tea, and have again for the thousandth time read over your delightful letter; you have brought wit out of — and —; verily I had not known the trees by the fruit, but you can work wonders when you please. They are indeed half as witty as Sir John Falstaff; that is, they are the cause of wit in other people. Your account of them is extremely entertaining; but I forgot that you never could write tolerably, but were always a mighty dull correspondent; you have told me so a thousand times, and it is a strange thing I never could remember it. I should be glad to have a party of horse to guard your letters, but for mine I am assured they

will go very safely by the by-post; if I revoke I will pay two tricks, as they do at cards. I am sorry my first letter was not so formidably formal \* as it should have been, but, to say the truth, I thought if it was too much upon the serious it would be suspected of being wrote for the occasion. As for what I said of Don, if ——— likes her, we are of the same opinion, if not, we shall not be rivals. I said, in my last letter, that I should not write to you till I had finished my peregrinations, and intimated that I should forbear troubling you with a letter till I could send your Grace a map of Yorkshire; you may suppose that was said on purpose to prevent any enquiries after my letters, for as to my travels the serjeant's circuit round the fire would be a tour as well worthy of memory. Pray when shall you visit the noble family at Brodsworth? I wish I was in their neighbourhood; I fancy it is a paradisaical family, and having the honour to be in some degree of favour with your Grace, I should hope to be admitted to their acquaintance. I honour their manner of life, and affection for each other; to maintain continual cheerfulness, without the gay pleasures of our great city, is great praise. Oh that you were to go, with only the Duke, to Brodsworth, and that Doncaster were within a day's journey from hence, I have love for your company that would, if not remove mountains, pass them. We might meet at Doncaster, if it were not for that odious impediment of almost all human desires, impossibility. I should be much diverted to hear that Desdemona was enamoured

\* The Dutchess was unwilling to show the whole of their intimate correspondence to Lady Oxford.



by these stories passing strange ; the hero being a fair man into the bargain, and having, in all hair-breadth 'scapes, received not one scar ; it is not impossible but something wondrous pitiful may be awakened in her tender heart. I return a thousand thanks for your long letter ; I rejoice that the Duke and the little angels are well.

I am, Madam,  
 your Grace's ever grateful, affectionate,  
 faithful, humble servant,  
 E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Mrs. Montagu.*

*Hildersham, Oct. 4, 1742.*

MADAM,

I SHOULD have paid my thanks much earlier for your obliging and entertaining letter, if business of various kinds, and the cares of farming and printing, in both which I am engaged, had not constantly prevented me, till I was forced to a resolution of being prevented by them no longer. I now therefore beg leave to assure you, that your letter gave me great pleasure on many accounts, but above all, by letting me see that you were not only perfectly at ease, and happy in your late change of condition, but furnished with all the materials proper to secure that happiness for life ; since the principles which you lay down for your conduct in it, cannot fail drawing every good out of it, which it can possibly yield. Young ladies who have been admired as beauties, are apt to consider an husband as an acquisition of conquest, and to be shocked at the thought of being reduced by marriage to a state of subjection, and

from a resolution to shake off this yoke, often lay the foundation of a contest which begins with matrimony itself, and continues sometimes to the end of it. But this capital point you wisely give up at once, and profess the duty of submission as essential to the character of a good wife ; a condescension, that can never betray you into any inconvenience, since a reasonable husband will never require more of it than is due, and a kind one always be content with less ; and when convinced of the disposition, will generally dispense with the act. As your profession, I dare say, is sincere, (for you have not had experience enough to make it the effect of art,) I may trust you with a paradox, which you will certainly find to be true, that the more submissive you are, the less you will be obliged to submit ; and should it be your ambition even to govern, you will acquire it with the most ease by acknowledging yourself a subject.

Between a married couple of sense and affection, for it is with such only that any happiness can be found, there can hardly happen any dispute but what must turn upon trifles, or the contrast, perhaps, of some little habits, which, though indifferent in themselves, cannot suffer a contradiction without some regret. But as these are common to both sexes, and every person has his foibles in some degree or other, it must be the business of reason to make this matter easy by mutual compliances, or a cartel, as it were, of exchange, where those, however, who happen to yield the most, will by that conquest over themselves, which of all others is the most beneficial, be sure to be the greatest gainers in the end. As I have formerly been a musician, so a reflection has sometimes occurred to me, from that art, which

might be applied, I think, with good effect to the married state ; for from the pains and patience, which are required to put an instrument in tune, before it can afford us any music, I have been induced to wonder why the married pair, who are mutually the instruments of that harmony on which each other's comfort depends, should be generally so regardless of the necessary care of tuning, or reducing each other's temper to its proper tone, by softening it when too sharp, and raising it when too low ; for I am persuaded that much less pains, than what we employ, without scruple, upon an harpsichord, would keep both the husband and wife in, what we call, concert pitch. But some perhaps may be apt to raise a different reflection from the same subject ; that discords in matrimony, like those in music, are both useful and necessary, to enhance and strengthen the harmony of the close. But the comparison will not hold, for the experiment of them will always be dangerous in the married state, where they may be compared more justly to those slight indispositions of the body, which, though they do not threaten the ruin of the whole, yet are apt to weaken some part ; and whose proper use is to admonish us to guard our health with the greater care. In short, if two enemies should be forced by any accident to be comrades for life, the necessity of the thing would soon oblige them to become friends. The same reason then, one would think, should more strongly engage a pair of friends, tied together by choice and affection in a partnership inseparable, to extirpate every seed of discord, that might possibly arise betwixt them. I have thrown together these few observations from my long experience of the married life,

not by way of counsel, which you do not want, but in confirmation of those excellent resolutions which your own good sense has suggested to you, and as a testimony of my regard and sincere wishes for your prosperity.

I was much pleased with the account that you gave of your brothers, who after being exposed, as it were, on the mountains of Yorkshire, were discovered at last, like enfans trouvés, by a sister unknown to them. I shall always think myself particularly interested in their success, for they were all born under my roof, which may one day perhaps derive an accession of fame from that circumstance. If I should live to see any of them in the University, it would be a pleasure to me to do every thing in my power that might be of use to their improvement.

I hope that you have found leisure to pay your intended visit to Edgely, for whatever entertainment that excursion may afford you, your relation of it, I dare say, will be entertaining to your friends. The country, as I remember, abounds with natural beauties, but of so wild and romantic a kind, as make the scene fitter for a landscape, than an habitation; and you, who have so good a hand at description, cannot fail to make a fine picture of it. By this time I suppose you begin to think of quitting the country, and returning to your winter quarters in town; Cambridge is but a little out of your road, where we should be proud to receive you at our house. We may plead some kind of right to expect this favour from you both, since this University had the honour of Mr. Montagu's education, and claims some share also in your's. I did not know that your sister was with you, or I should have added our compliments to her, which I desire you to make; and with our wishes of all the

happiness to Mr. Montagu and yourself, beg leave to  
 subscribe myself, with the greatest truth,

Madam,

your affectionate friend, &c. &c.

CONYERS MIDDLETON.

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*Allerthorpe, October the 10th, 1742.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I HAD the pleasure of finding your letter upon my table last night at my return to Allerthorpe, from whence I had been three days upon an expedition to a wild part of the country called the Dales, where nature's works are not delicate, pretty, and mignonne, but grand, sublime, and magnificent. Vast mountains, rocks, and cascades, and rapid rivers make the country beautiful and surprizing: we went to a farm abounding in wonders, a high hill with some hanging wood before it, behind it a large and rapid river with the prospect of a huge cascade, an old castle, and a church. Some houses in view take from it the honour of absolute solitude; a range of rocks appears like the ruins of an old town on the other side of the river. In the cottage built in this charming place, lives an old woman who has attained to an hundred and four years, and for this long lease of life has not exchanged the best comfort. She enjoys good health, tolerable strength, has her hearing perfect, and her sight very well; is cheerful and has not lost her reason or apprehension, but answers with sense and spirit; her hair is of a fine black: she was knit-

ting when we went to her, and has promised to knit me a pair of stockings in a month. My father had a house in this part of the world for the summer sports of shooting and fishing, so that the old woman and I had been well acquainted fifteen years ago, and she told me, laughing, she imagined I did not expect to see her alive at this time. If the near prospect of death is terrible, it is a melancholy thing to live till every day of added life is a miracle; but such is the happy and merciful order of things, that hope is eternal, and therefore we cannot outlive it. It has for our amusement the midsummer's dream, and the winter's tale; and the ear, deaf to all other music, is still soothed by its flattering voice. You may suppose my old woman is no philosopher, or I would enquire of her what pleasure she had in reflection on the past, possession of the present, or prospect of the future time. Can this world be still a land of promise for her? After so long and weary a journey of life, can hope still lead her by the hand? She remembers the siege of the old castle in Oliver's days, but her billet at the fire was found,

Whoever was deposed or crown'd.

The storms of fate that shake the cedar, sweep lightly over the creeping ivy, and the humble moss; she was too low for the tyrant to oppress, too poor for the usurper to rob, so that all the revolutions of our kingdom have not affected this little subject. I am very glad I am not in any danger of living to this age, for with most people the last page of life is a blank or a tragedy; either insensibility or suffering; and one becomes an object of pity or contempt to the young, or of terror

to those approaching age. I return you many thanks for sending me the means of being warm : the carrier is not yet arrived. I thank you for your prudent foresight in making the mantle large enough : I hope in time I may be worthy of it ; but at present the jumps are of a virginal size. As for my complexion, I cannot greatly commend it, but for qualmishness, I am never maukish but when things are too sweet or folks are too civil. Do you think I would be guilty of such an indecorum as to be in so unprudish a way already ? I am glad Mrs. Dewes has not suffered so terribly this time. I hope poor Pen has not been in such fear : as for Pen, she is not a daughter of Eve, but of the collateral branch of Enoch, who walked as an angel before the children of men. I know she would not be guilty of such a grosslêreté as having a child for the world : she is a perfect Seraphim, all fine music and pure spirit, and must be grieved her sister should condescend to such mortal matters ; indeed, nothing is less divine and angelical than a breeding woman ; sick with a piece of toast and butter, or longing for a bit of tripe, liver, or black-pudding. I am obliged to the little Pere for remembering me. If matrimony does not spoil my philosophy faster than it mends my constitution, I may be very philosophical. Tell Mr. Courayer\* my head is as much troubled with chimeras and giddiness as ever. I fear he is too fond of variety in life to be a friend to matrimony : the merriest man I have seen in Yorkshire is a Frenchman, who came here for religion, and has

\* Translator of Father Paul's History of the Council of Trent, and of Sleidan's History of the Reformation.

had the needful of life added unto him; he has a little estate, and lives with the mountain nymphs, liberty and health, in the Dales; he amuses himself with singing to his grand children, mending his clothes, and making soup; his grandson eats soup with him, and his next darling, le petit chat, helps him off with the bouillie; he can not only make a fine dish of the cabbage, but of the snails and caterpillars, and what we call the unprofitable vermin that live upon it; there was not a creature in Noah's Ark that would not be received into his larder, for a Frenchman is seldom so proud of stomach as to term any thing unclean. I have had the pleasure of hearing often from our amiable Dutchess; may health and content ever go along with her! You say nothing of your own health, for which you know I am always anxious. Pray, if the design of your journey to Ireland is laid aside, let me have the satisfaction of hearing it. We must come to town for the Parliament, and I believe not till then. I suppose the P—— depends upon a certain person's coming from abroad. I shall be very glad to be as near you as Dover-street is to Bond-street; but if it were not for you and my brothers, I could be content to stay here till spring. I suppose you have got Lady Sunderland and Lady Catharine Hanmer in town. I should think Mrs. Duncomb would not stay much longer in the country: if she is in town, pray make my compliments, as also to Miss Sutton. Mr. Montagu desires his particular compliments to you: you both deserve each other's esteem, which I think is saying the civillest think I can to you and to him; you are the best of friends, and he is the best of husbands. I am very happy in a few, which



makes up for my want of joy in the multitude, for you know I like but few creatures upon two legs, and none upon four; as for the Ringwoods called squires, or hounds, the Cupids and Dappers called beaux, or lap-dogs, they delight not me; nor parrots, nor fine ladies, nor gossips, nor magpies, nor geese, nor hens, nor notable women: some have a capacious heart that can take in the whole creation; my affections are more contracted.

I am,  
dear Madam, your most affectionate

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

October 17th, 1742.

MADAM,

I SHALL be extremely mortified if your Grace does not tell me that last week, by a kind of natural impulse, you sung "Patrick Flemming sat on a mountain," for I was acting the part of Patrick of renowned memory: I was sometimes upon the most magnificent mountains, at others in the most agreeable vallies, in the thickest woods, and the fairest lawns, by the prettiest murmuring streams, the finest smooth-gliding rivers, the hugest roaring cascades; on moors immeasurable, in narrow lanes almost impassable; through sandy ways and rocky roads. All this appears mere fiction, by the serious opprobriously called rodomontade; but it is really a truth; the mountain is a great and unquestionable witness, and the cascade loudly declares

the truth of what I say. All these wonders are to be met with in Bishop's dale ; we went to Mr. Buckle's (whom you have heard me mention for his care of my youngest brothers), to spend three days ; his house is but a mile from that we used to pass the shooting season in, when my father was fond of that diversion ; so that nothing was entirely new ; but though the lapse of fifteen years has not altered the objects, it has my apprehension of them. The country is perfectly unlike what I have ever seen in other parts of England. I wish my letter could be so affected by the recollection of the place I was in, that my style might be sublime and lofty as the mountain, flowery as the vale, or rapid as the cascade, or smooth, and deep, and gently-gliding as the river ; but I was so ill after my jaunt as not to be able to write, and if I had wrote in such suffering circumstances, you neither would have commended the writer nor the writing. My disorder was owing to fatigue : rest and repose, no strangers to the country fire-side, have entirely recovered me, and I am now perfectly well, and in spirits. Had I wings, I would pierce the recess of your dressing-room, turn study and meditation out of doors, and banish silence from the place, sit down, talk with you, tell you stories, ask you questions,

And hear and see you all the while,  
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

When the bell summoned you to soup and ceremony,  
adieu jusqu' au revoir, and the country mouse would  
retire to Allerthorpe, in like manner as recorded by

pleasant Master Æsop, and rehearsed by the ingenious Lady Harriot Bentinck. Mr. Montagu desires his compliments to your Grace and my Lord Duke; we talk of you and drink your health as often as you can expect from sober people. Had I married a Tory fox-hunter he might have toasted you in a larger draught; but for temperate Whigs we do you reason.

I am, my dear Lady Dutchess's most grateful, and most affectionate

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Allerthorpe, October the 30th.*

MADAM,

I IMAGINE your Grace has lately had two very trouble some letters from me; but the charity of your friendship will cover my multitude of sins; so for my transgression of all good manners I will make no more apologies. I am infinitely obliged to you for desiring two sheets of paper full of my ingenious thoughts, but really methinks meditations upon a fire-shovel, and such other matters as come within my observation, ought not to spread themselves over such a vast extent of paper. As to forbearing to tell news, though I am, by natural constitution, prone to tell all I know, yet shall I utter no news, for in very truth I hear none; we Yorkshire folks are very ignorant and barbarous; I cannot be of opinion that this sharp air gives a keen wit; for I have met with many a blunt genius here. If it were as safe for me as it would be pleasant to go to

London, I should be right glad thereof, for I am a very swallow, and cannot abide the country in winter. I love peace with pleasure; but I have such a tendency to dulness, that I am afraid of mere tranquillity.—I love to be a spectator of the rapid world while my little machine is at rest; the actions and passions of others keep me awake, without so far disturbing the constant mood of my calm thoughts, as to make me uneasy; but the lullaby of conversation that one's country visitors entertain one with, affects me with a very intolerable drowsiness: the news and chat of this country touches me no more than the Jewish chronicle does a modern infidel prime-minister; then the panegyric the good people bestow on each other finds no echo in my breast, though, in the hollowness of civil insincerity, I may sometimes be forced to repeat it after them. I assure you it is wonderful, to see people so little admirable so much admired. By the courtesy of Yorkshire, every one is wise and good-natured, with a long et cætera of virtues, whose existence they only know by hearsay. The Duke of Cl——d is reckoned a good agreeable man; poor creature! is he not fulsome enough without the daub of nauseous praise? A commended fool is that offensive compound, a sweet and a stink: praise that passes from the wise and judicious, to the virtuous and excellent, is sweet in the sense of all men, the reward of past good deeds, and the incentive to future noble actions; but undeserved commendation, flying at random, destroys the value of good fame, by misapplying it. Shall this fairest jewel in the crown of virtue be cast to the common herd? Farewell then all that makes ambition virtue. It is common to cry

out that the world is censorious; I think there are so many other vices to which mankind are more prone, that we might better say, it is a covetous world, a luxurious and an ambitious world, &c. &c. &c. I believe other vices do so far exceed this humour, that there are more wicked than condemned people. Censure is bitter indeed, but it is a wholesome bitter, like wormwood, that preserves the wary breast from the infection and contagion of corrupt and vicious times; it is that necessary

Something beyond the letter of the law,  
That keeps our men and maids in awe.

Many, I fear, would act absurdly if it were not for the fear of ridicule, and wickedly, but for the fear of reproach. Satire is the wholesome medicine of morality that purges and purifies; but it is the sick and not the whole that have need of medicine; to wound innocence is the most unpardonable fault a person can be guilty of. Truth is always divine and holy, and wholesome when severe, but pleasant when it is sweet and gentle; every opportunity of praising merit is grateful to the virtuous mind,

The quality of mercy is not strain'd, but blest alike  
In what it gives and what it takes.

But weak indulgence, masked in mercy's garb, is a very pernicious impostor. You see, my dear Lady Dutchess, I am surfeited with this sweetness of conversation here; I fear at London there will be too little charity; but I shall have some friends there who are not afraid of speaking any thing but untruth; and with such is the freedom of conversation; and I am now for-

bidden the toil and trouble of visiting, and, like other people of a contented disposition, find happiness in my infirmities. I fear, now my trouble abroad is diminished, my happiness at home will be so, for I imagine it will be impossible for Mr. Montagu to delay his journey beyond the meeting of the Parliament; nor indeed can I wish he should, for I think it is the duty of those in the House to attend; and as I believe he never omitted any thing he ought to do, I would not have him begin now. My sister and I shall be a little at a loss for conversation, not that I shall on my part want words, but, like school-boys when they are about their exercises, I may want to borrow a little sense now and then. I wrote to Lady ——— a little while ago; I am sorry to hear of her want of happiness, but it is thinly sown in this world, and only falls in the lot of the independent; as for absolute independence indeed, there is no such thing in nature; but I mean freedom from fear. The ties of love, though the strictest bands, are easy, those of interest galling. I am extremely concerned at Lady Oxford's and the Duke's illness; pray tell me if your Grace would have me write a visible letter. I should be infinitely obliged to you if you would tell me when Whitehall will become a Paradise to the soul of Madam Fidget. I am always asking about your going to town, but not a word of reply can I extort. How happy will our meetings be this year, free and unconstrained! my little tabernacle shall be sacred to friendship, and its best votary and greatest ornament the Dutchess of Portland. When shall I have arrived at the utmost limit of my love for you? I have long thought I could not love you more, but my regard is

ever increasing; I am very happy if you love me in any proportion to that sincere, tender, and faithful affection with which I am,

Madam, ever your's,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

Nov. 5.

MADAM,

My heart and hand are too much yours to permit me to employ another's to dictate, or write to your Grace, when I am able to do it. I had your letter, for which I am obliged to you: I feel all the sensibility of friendship when I reflect you are unhappy. I hope my Lord Duke will have no more of the complaint in his stomach. Lady Oxford really knows her remedy, and I hope you will prevail upon her Ladyship to go to Bath. I had not any letter from Dr. Sandys, but you know he has always a very tedious labour when he goes of a letter. I wish he was well delivered of this, for I am impatient to know my doom; whether I am to sit here, like Patience on a monument, or may be allowed, in my quondam character of a Fidget, to bustle into the bustling world. My appetite for the country is satisfied, and I should like to see London fine town again; and I shall be a poor wife (pity, but for the verse, it were maiden) forsaken,

Yet must bear a contented mind,  
But when leave of me he has taken,  
I can't have another as kind.

The last line sets forth the melancholy circumstance. As for single ladies, the loss of a lover is nothing ; for, as Millamant says, one makes as many as one pleases, and keeps them as long as one pleases ; but it is worth while to take care of a good husband, for they are reckoned rarities. I am pretty well at present, but I don't much like this sort of constitution. I believe Sandys would not tell his wife a secret for fear she should go abroad to tell it, and, you know, he loves she should sit, like sober puss in the corner, to offend all those who would annoy the cheese, or other good things in his cupboard ; for, I guess, it is from some principle of œconomy that he keeps her at home.

I am, Madam,

your Grace's faithful, humble servant,

E. M.

*To the Same.*

*Allerthorpe, Nov. 19, 1742.*

MADAM,

WHAT prophets are my fears ! they whispered to me your Grace was not well, and I find their suggestions were true. Hard state of things, that one may believe one's fears but cannot rely upon one's hopes ! I imagined concern would have an ill effect on your constitution ; I know you have many pledges in the hands of fate, and I feared for you, and every thing that was near and dear to you. I am sensible your regard and tenderness for Lady Oxford will make you suffer ex-



tremely when you see her ill; she has therefore a double portion of my good wishes, on her own and your Grace's account. When sensibility of heart and head makes you feel all the outrages that fortune and folly offer, why do you not envy the thoughtless giggle and unmeaning smile? "In Folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy." Wisdom's cup is often dash'd with sorrow, but the nepenthe of stupidity is the only medicine of life; fools neither are troubled with fear nor doubt. What did the wisdom of the wisest man teach him? Verily, that all was vanity and vexation of spirit! A painful lesson fools will never learn, for they are of all vanities most vain. And there is not so sweet a companion as that same vanity; when we go into the world it leads us by the hand, if we retire from it, it follows us; it meets us at court, and finds us in the country; commends the hero that gains the world, and the philosopher that forsakes it; praises the luxury of the prodigal, and the prudence of the penurious; feasts with the voluptuous, fasts with the abstemious, sits on the pen of the author, and visits the paper of the critic; reads dedications, and writes them; makes court to superiors, receives homage of inferiors; in short, it is useful, it is agreeable, and the very thing needful to happiness: had Solomon felt some inward vanity, sweet sounds had been ever in his ears without the voices of men-singers, or women-singers; he had not then said of laughter, what is it? and of mirth, what doeth it? Vanity, and a good set of teeth, would have taught him the ends and purposes of laughing, that fame may be acquired by it, where, like the proposal for the grinning wager,

The frightfullest grinner,  
Is the winner.

Did not we think Lady C — would get nothing by that broad grin but the tooth-ache? but vanity, profitable vanity, was her better counsellor; and as she always imagined the heart of a lover was caught between her teeth, I cannot say his delay is an argument of her charms, or his gallantry, but she has him secure by an old proverb, that what is bred in the bone will never out of the flesh, and no doubt but this love was bred in the bone, even in the jaw-bone. No wonder if tame, weak man, is subdued by that weapon with which Sampson killed the mighty lion. Mr. Montagu got well to London on Monday night. I am glad your facetious senator is gone to Parliament, where all his conversation will be yea, yea, and nay, nay; and even of that cometh evil sometimes. Time will not allow me to lengthen this epistle with any thing more than my sister's compliments to your Grace.

I am, Madam, your's, &c.

E. M.

*To the Same.*

Nov. 23, 1742.

MADAM,

I AM very sorry I have not received all the letters your Grace has been so good as to write to me; Fate received them into her left hand, and I am deprived of

them. I am glad to hear your spirits are better ; may circling joys dance round your fire-side,

With Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,  
And Laughter, holding both his sides !

for life is too short to allow for melancholy fears and intruding cares, which are apt to fill up the youthful time, when we are fittest for happiness. Age will bring its solemn train of woe ; let us therefore admit all Youth's gay company, smiling Joy, cheerful Mirth, and happy Hope ; life's early Hours come dancing along with their fair partner Pleasure, but in the evening of our day they tread a heavy measure, dragging after them weak Infirmary and sad Regret,

Expencc, and after thought, and idle care,  
And doubts of motley hue, and dark despair.

I grieve whenever I think your mind is pained ; all infirmities and diseases of the body are nothing compared to anguish of heart. I am now in the highest content ; my little brothers are to go to Westminster as soon as the holidays are over, and what adds still to my pleasure in this is, that Jacky's going is owing to Mr. Montagu's intercession for him with my father, who did not design his going to Westminster till next year : our youngest, I believe, is to go out with our new captain. I would give a great deal for a tête-à-tête with your Grace, mais hélas ! ma pauvre tête n'est pas une tête ailée. It would have been a strange and unnatural thing that Dr. Sandys's letter should have miscarried ; my faith has swallowed his advice, and my throat his pills ; so I have endured the country, and taken his

physic, very unpalatable things both. I am pretty well, but I do not like to sit, like puss in the corner, all the winter, to watch what may prove a mouse, though I am no mountain. I am rejoiced Lady Kinnoul, and the young ladies, are with you. I cannot boast of the numbers that adorn our fire-side; my sister and I are the principal figures; besides, there is a round table, a square skreen, some books, and a work-basket, with a smelling-bottle when morality grows musty, or a maxim smells too strong, as sometimes they will in ancient books. I had a letter to-day from Mr. Montagu, in which he flatters me with the hopes of seeing him at Christmas. I hear your Grace's porter says you will not leave Welbeck these two months, and Elias is no lying man. I know, full well, however he may deny you by parcels, he will not thus in the gross; so, I imagine, you will not be in London this age, which makes me more contented with being in the country. My Lady Croakledom is croaking on the banks of Styx, where, with Cerberus's barking mouths, and Tysiphone's belle chevelure, she will make most pleasant melody: with such a noise in his ears how glad would Pluto be if Orpheus would give him a tune once more! Lady Limerick, imagining I came to town with Mr. Montagu, sent an excuse, that being ill, she had not been able to make me a visit. I guess it would raise great speculations why I was not come up, and had you been within question-shot, the good Countess had popped off a volley upon you, I make no doubt. I hear Lord Cobham and Lord Gower are going to resign; and, I hope, with less regret than I resign my pen; but the letters are sent for. Time is a monarch that commands,

as many sovereigns do, to the vexation and detriment of their subjects, therefore, to show my loyalty to King Time, I must obey his minister, the hour, that commands my letter hence. My sister desires her compliments.

I am, my dear Lady Dutchess,  
your most grateful and affectionate,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.*

SIR,

I THINK I hear you exclaim against long letters from a sober yawning fire-side in the country, and, I own, my paper makes a formidable appearance; but you shall find it so little stained by any tincture of thought, or colour of imagination, that you shall own it differs little from blank paper, the most innocent and inoffensive thing in the world. I know it will please you to hear that I have, every day since you made me a wife, had more reason to thank you for the alteration. I have the honour and happiness to be made the guest of a heart furnished with the best and greatest virtues, honesty, and integrity, and universal benevolence, with the most engaging affection to every one who particularly belongs to him; no desire of power but to do good, no use of it but to make happy. I cannot be so unjustly diffident as to doubt of the duration of my happiness, when I see the author of it dispensing content to all his dependants, and should he ever cease to use me with more care, generosity, and affection, than I

deserve, I should be the first person he has ever treated in this manner. Since I married, I have never heard him say an ill-natured word to any one, nor have I received one matrimonial frown. His generous affection in loving all my friends, and desiring every opportunity for my conversing with them, is very obliging to me. We have often pleased ourselves with the hopes of seeing you frequently in Dover-street this winter; but, alas! I am a prisoner at Allerthorpe, and the worst of prisoners, confined by infirmities and ill health. Mr. Montagu went to Parliament ten days ago, to my mortification, but with my approbation. I desired him to go, and half wished him to stay; I knew his righteous star would rule his destiny; so I helped him on with honour's boots, and let him go without murmuring. He left me my sister, and where she is there will happiness be also. Her temper is continual sunshine; she smooths the rugged brow of winter, and, without gloom or storm within doors, we sit contented, though the elements disagree, or the sun refuse to shine. We have not been troubled with any visitor since Mr. Montagu went away, and could you see how ignorant, how awkward, how absurd, and how uncouth the generality of people are in this country, you would look upon this as no trifling piece of good fortune; had they with their ignorance the naiveté of an ingenuous untaught mind, or the integrity of honest and unexperienced simplicity, I could admire the intrinsic worth of the ore, though it had rust upon it; but, for the most part, they are drunken and vicious, and, worse than hypocrites, profligates; I mean more offensive, and I know not whether less pernicious: but do not mention this, for

they will not mend themselves, but may hurt others. I am very happy that drinking is not within our walls; we have not had one person disordered by liquor since we came down; though most of the poor ladies in the neighbourhood have had more hogs in their dining-room than ever they had in their hogsty. I hope you will write to me soon; post-days are great comforts to us, and keep our affections awake for our friends. I imagine you will have seen Dr. Middleton's Translations of the Epistles by this time; pray tell me what you think of them, I want much to see them; I love the noble fierté of Brutus, in that letter the Doctor translated in the life of Cicero, where Brutus reproaches him with having asked their lives of Octavius; the Doctor objects that there is little policy in it; perhaps it may want a little human prudence, but it has a divine spirit in it: no sophisticated arguments, nor fine-spun politics to prove that right which was wrong till it was profitable and advantageous. How many Brutus's shall we see in our senate this year? Shall they who last year "struck the foremost man i'the world,"\* now contaminate their fingers with base bribes? Those who wanted to turn him out, and now would screen him, must have coveted his power, without hating his actions, and are, I think, as void of modesty as of honesty. I hope the few righteous will save the city, and that those who have sacrificed their virtue, honour, and reputation, and have passed through infamy to mammon, will find that their

\* Sir Robert Walpole.

peace of mind was made a victim too ; but, alas ! all, all look up with reverential awe,

At crimes that 'scape, or triumph o'er the law ;

and the successful wicked are more the envy than the detestation of mankind. I often think that those people are happiest who know nothing at all of the world, and sitting in the little empire of their fire-side, where is no contention or cabal, think we are in a golden age of innocence ; for those who are gaining a knowledge of the world are blotting their minds with a register of black deeds ; and, except the little Pharisaical triumph that one is not as these Publicans, what satisfaction can it give ? Does the seeing that the generality of men are corrupt, either reward our benevolence, or encourage it ? Some people are endued with an apologizing quality that covers spots ; but gall, honest, bitter gall, is the only thing that takes out the grease and filth. It is the business of true charity to cure faults or prevent them, and not to conceal them. Just censure is to be encouraged, for the fear of blame is the best antidote against the poison of vice ; and I love not that excess of goodness, that temper, flowing with milk and honey, that can whiten and sweeten a black and corrupt reputation. Let me repeat my request that you would write soon, and tell me when you keep your residence.

I am, dear Sir, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.



*To the Dutchess of Portland.**December the 5th, 1742.***MADAM,**

AFTER being sunk into stupidity by the company of a strange kind of animal called a country beau and wit, how unfit am I for the conversation of the Dutchess of Portland! But it is your Grace only that can recover me from the lethargy I am fallen into, therefore, in the spirit of charity, allow me to take up my pen to write to you. When one has been some hours contemplating a human creature who cannot attain the perfection of a monkey, even the art of mimicry, how lowly does one esteem one's species! Let me raise my opinion of them by dedicating the remainder of this evening to the conversation of one who is an honour to our kind. Had you seen the pains this animal has been taking to imitate the cringe of a beau, and the smartness of a wit, till he was hideous to behold, and horrible to hear, you would have pitied him; he walks like a tortoise, and chatters like a magpye; by the indulgence of a kind mother, and the advantage of a country education, he was first a clown, then he was sent to the Inns of Court, where he first fell into a red waistcoat and velvet breeches; then into vanity: this light companion led him to the play-house, where he ostentatiously coquetted with the orange-wenchs, who cured him of the bel-air of taking snuff, by abridging him of his nostrils. Grown even in his own eyes no very lovely figure, he thought Bacchus, no critic in faces, would prove in the end a better friend to him than Cupid; according-

ly he fell into the company of the jovial ; till want of money and want of taste led this prodigal son, if not to eat, to drink with swine ; he visited the prisons, not as a comforter, but as a companion to the criminals ; shook hands with the gold-finder, and walked in the ways of the scavenger ; so singular his humility, none were his contempt. At last, having spent his money, ruined his constitution, and lost all the little sense nature gave him, he returned to the country, where all the youths of inferior rank admiring his experience, and emulating his qualities, and copying his manners, grew, some fit for jail, others for transportation : those who went the least length, grew fit for nothing good. Notwithstanding all these vices, and the most nauseous effect of them, all people treat him civilly, and one gentleman in the neighbourhood is so fond of him, as, I believe, to spend a great deal of money, and most of his time, upon him. Alas ! that hours, and days, and years, should be given to those who thus mis-spend them ! While the learned die in the search of useful knowledge, the beneficent is made to cease his good works, the virtuous no longer allowed to set a good example, the righteous judge is cut off in the administration of justice, and the patriot falls while he is defending the liberty of his country ; sure, these are the heirs of eternity ; and then the longest life here is but a span, and may be lavished equally on all, else, sure, this precious gift of time, by which may be purchased wisdom, honour, and renown, would not be lent to those who with no fair act have sanctified one day, have never wiped tears from the miserable, given comfort to a friend, or assistance to any one. But the ways

of Providence are veiled from human sight, it is enough that by its visible works we see that all is dictated by unerring wisdom, and unexhaustible goodness; there let ever our proud questions end, and so sink our presumptuous enquiry. Mrs. Meadows\* has behaved in every thing greatly to her credit and my satisfaction; she is, I believe, unfeignedly glad of my present condition; for my part, I hope it is for the best, and that it will hereafter be a subject of happiness; but in all our addresses to Heaven, we should be earnest only in thanksgiving. Of what is past we only are the judge, blind and unknowing of what is to come. You know my heart is unfit to bear the "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," and now she will find me vulnerable in the tenderest part, even maternal fondness. Without the dearest concerns, life has no interesting scenes for us; exempt from affections and duties, where can arise our merit and our happiness? Old age is in itself comfortless and joyless; hope ceases to promise when time has little more to give, so that unless our affections are kept living in those we love, for whom we may rejoice, enjoy, and hope, every agreeable sentiment is banished from the mind, regret seizes on our past lives, and pain and weariness possess the present time. Old age,

Last scene, that ends our strange, eventful story,

must seem a horrid period to an useless life; but if we are fortunate in our posterity, see our best virtues likely to bloom in them, and our fortunes

\* Mr. Montagu's sister, wife of Mr. afterwards Sir Sidney Meadows.

flourish with them ; our youth and life is lengthened to another generation. This thought will warm our hearts when the blood freezes in our veins ; hope and joy shall attend our latest hour ; but if, instead of this, we bury comfort in the dear shape of our beloved children, great are the pangs indeed ! I will not dwell upon this sad subject ; but hope cannot come without doubt and fear in her train : that still I find joy corrected by a thousand gloomy apprehensions. Your Grace is singularly happy in your little ones ; such amiable tempers, beautiful forms, and good constitutions, seem to promise all delight to you, and happy exulting pride ; I hope they will answer your hopes as fairly as they promise them. Oh my friend !

May each domestic joy be thine,  
Be no unpleasing melancholy mine !

Your happiness will ever be an addition to mine. I hope I may this year enjoy your company with more freedom, than when the higher powers were to be consulted before I could have a room to myself. Mr. Montagu is too sincere and kind a friend not to rejoice at your friendship for me, which he knows is an honour and a happiness to me. Letters are sent for : I can add no more.

I am, Madam, yours, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*December the 5th, 1742.*

DEAR MADAM,

I AM SORRY to find my dear friend has so little of health, the first and chiefest ingredient of happiness, that heavenly composition, so rarely to be met with on earth. I had designed to write to you as soon as I knew of your return from Twickenham, for while you continue ill I must renounce the pleasure of your letters, and content myself with hearing of you by Mr. Montagu. I am much obliged to you for your good wishes; it is supposing there is something better than mere tranquillity and ease of mind, to desire objects of so near concern and fondness: I know not if it is according to the true estimate of human happiness, but it is agreeable to our common way of judging of it; we are not apt to wish to collect ourselves and our possessions into a very small compass; we ask for many blessings, though we are sensible the keeping them is precarious, and the parting with them grievous: impatient players at the game of fortune, but yet fond to get in our stakes! The exercise of every virtue that nature has implanted makes up the merit of humanity; many are made deaf to the calls of virtue by the storms of passion, or an indolence of mind; and the best may most triumph in their faculty of reflection, for by this is our happiness raised above brutes; they act always according to instinct, our greatest merit is only to do so too, but we are allowed to reflect on this rectitude of habit with joy and pride. We do best when we

follow nature; they never deviate from its rules. If the stoic's pride, the philosopher's learning, or the hero's presumption, would lift them above humanity, they are no more to be commended for their courses than the wild comet that runs blazing, with unconfined and unaccountable motion, through the vast universe; the learned will determine it to be out of its way, and describe its wandering journey, but it will raise superstition, error, and mistake, in the minds of the vulgar, who fondly pay greater worship to this wandering meteor, than to the right regulated planet: though every thing is really best moving in its own sphere, however bright and illustrious they seem out of it. I hope I shall find happiness in acquitting myself justly of the humble duties of a private family; I shall aspire to no higher character than that of a good woman. Those who endeavour to reconcile the good wife with the reputation of a beauty, a toast, a wit, and I know not what, have the art of bringing together things in their natures contrary. To be very serviceable to one's family, with spending only the hours of sleeping in it, may be above my art; my heart will always be open to my friends, my house to the agreeable, and I will take a moderate share of diversion abroad; but my attention is to my own fire-side, and this, I assure you, is merely my own inclination; for though Mr. Montagu does every thing that can make my home agreeable, he has never by the least hint recommended to me to stay in it. Writing is in itself very uneasy to me; I am often obliged to do more of it than is agreeable to my constitution, but I know, at this time, my friends are more attentive to my demonstrations of love to

them, than before I changed my way of life ; but were my heart of such light inconstant stuff as to alter to my friends by any difference of situation, I should not think my affection a present worthy of Mr. Montagu's acceptance, and should rather settle it upon a toy-shop, than offer it to him. I expect Mr. Montagu here the latter end of this month, but he is obliged to wait for some law business, that he cannot come down as soon as the Parliament breaks up for the holidays. One finds great loss of a cheerful, agreeable companion, in a place as retired as this. I am afraid I should murmur at his absence even in our great and populous city ; for that illustrious body, called the beau monde, cannot atone for the want of a sincere, kind friend. Gratitude and esteem attribute to one person, what one cannot find in a thousand ; and those who seek true happiness in a crowd, seem ever seeking what they never find. If our spirit of love once gets out of the ark, like Noah's dove, it finds no resting place ; our family and friends are those from whom we must expect happiness, the rest is a raree-show ; there is the representation of fine things indeed, but it is mere deceit ; diverting and innocently amusing to those who look upon it as no other than what it is ; but if, Don Quixote like, we dignify it with our fancy and chimera, there is both absurdity and danger in the mistake. Believe me, my dear Mrs. Donnellan, your sincere, faithful, and unalterable friend,

ELIZ. MONTAGU.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

Dec. 28, 1742.

MADAM,

I HAVE contrived that my letter shall lay in ambush for your Grace against your coming to town, that it may pay you compliments of congratulation upon the happy occasion of revisiting our charming metropolis, and, at the same time, give you the wishes of a happy new year; which, I hope, will bring to you new pleasures, and preserve to you all your already attained happiness. I have wrote to the ladies, and Lord Titchfield, to date myself their correspondent from the year 42-3; I mean for the young ladies; as for his Lordship, I think he will like Seneca's head and morals as well as my face and company, some twenty years hence; I have already a long pale face that affrights all the Cupidons, either with or without wings, equally terrible to those of the isle of Paphos, or the isle of Great Britain. But no matter; if I had Cupid's bow and quiver, in truth, not even for rhyme's sake, would I pierce either heart or liver; Hymen, I hope, has secured one heart to me, et un me suffit, and that one is nobly furnished with all virtues, and liberality and humanity to crown them. I suppose your Grace will see the owner of it when he returns to London; at present, I guess he is in Berkshire. Mr. Montagu was to have come here this week, but the law's delay has kept him from her, whom, except your Grace, you must know, I think the best wife in the world; but pray take my opinion for it, for 'tis said man and



wife are not always of one mind about any thing, and perhaps especially on this subject; so pray inquire no farther, but have a catholic faith in my goodness, and implicitly believe all that my infallibility shall affirm about it. I expected to have heard last post, when Mr. Montagu would come to fetch me to your great city, but lo! the terrible law, when it fastens its paw, does so confine people, that they may not stir; but he desires me to come to him; indeed, he says he will meet me, which will fulfil the decorum; for it would be vast offence to prudery to pursue one of that sex from which we ought to fly, as say all mothers, grand-mothers, and especially maiden aunts. However, next Sunday se'nnight I shall set out, to my inexpressible joy, I shall change the whistling of the wind for the voice of my friends and mirth; oh, blest vicissitude! I had rather live in Æolus's den than in the country at this time of the year without the voice of, at least, ten people, of which one talks and nine laugh, for a small family is not sufficient to drown this hollow wind. Dr. Sandys says I may travel, and he speaks like a Solomon; I shall move as slowly as a fat corpse in a hearse; but the coach making a progress still forward, I shall at length get to my journey's end. Your Grace asks me if I have left off footing, and tumbling down stairs; as to the first, my fidgetations are much spoiled; sometimes I have cut a thoughtless caper, which has gone to the heart of an old steward of Mr. Montagu's, who is as honest as Trusty in the play of *Grief à la Mode*; I am told he has never heard a hop that he has not echoed with a groan. I have taken such heed to my goings I have not gone down stairs more than by gradual de-

grees. I hope you have found all your friends well ; I reckon they will gather together about you as soon as you get into your house. I wish I could make one of the happy assembly ; after a sober journey of ten tedious days I may get to town. At your Grace's desire I have read Mr. Hervey ; I think he has some very good thoughts ; but there is, in my opinion, a great deal of absurdity, with now and then apparent nonsense. He says some pretty things on friendship, but the subject is worthy the tongue of angels, or angel-like mortals ; there must be a mind of more steadiness and harmony than his to comprehend it. Solomon, I think, says the best things on friendship. Friendship is the glory of humanity ; the philosopher speaks of it with pride, and the powerful with ostentation, but its true kingdom is founded in the heart that is free from the low vices of avarice and luxury, or the high ones of ambition and glory ; for it is often sacrificed to mean ends or great desires. The man who, I think, best heard its voice amidst the tumults of a public life, was Cicero. I have known people boast of firmness in bearing the loss of friends, that would have fretted at being robbed of ten pounds. Swift says very well, that he never knew any man who could not bear another's misfortunes perfectly like a Christian ; and, indeed, I have seldom known fortitude, or even the word made use of, but in regard to those misfortunes that did not touch the person. Many are calm spectators of another's woe ; few resigned sufferers of their own. I fear your Grace will find poor Mrs. Donnellan in a bad state of health ; I wish to see her, and yet I am afraid her illness will damp the joy of our meeting. What you say of conversation is a me-

lancholy truth ; if it was not for the redundant impertinence of foolish people, and the pragmatistical dryness of some sensible ones, I should think the gift of speech a much greater ornament to humanity ; as for fools, it is a sin for sensible people to keep company with them, the very worst offence, sin against oneself ; they are unsafe, unpleasant, and unprofitable company. I never knew any ass but Balaam's, that either spoke truth, or gave good advice ; they do not intend to deceive, but they have the misfortune to be ever mistaken, which is equally pernicious to those with whom they converse. Their conversation tends only to encourage one's prejudices and errors ; but conversation is a nice composition, flattery is hurtful, reproof painful. A true reasonable companion is a valuable and rare blessing ; by their opinion one may reform one's faults without smarting for them. With the flatterer one grows ostentatious, and with the censurer reserved ; the friend that is

To all one's virtues very kind,  
To all one's faults a little blind,

cherishes the first, and gently mends the other ; but I must take my leave ; I have the clock's admonition for it ; while it struck out the quarters, I could bear its warning, but now growing peremptory, like an importune adviser, I hate its voice.

I am, Madam,  
your Grace's, &c. &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.**Dover-street, 12 July, 1743.***MADAM,**

You desire much of my thoughts, and many of my words ; as for the first, I cannot help their rambling after your Grace, and of the latter you know I am not retentive. All the gift of tongues, bestowed on mankind, are retired to Mr. Finch's, in Saville-row ; the general voice lives there in the person of the Countess of Granville. I went there with Mrs. Meadows on Sunday, and, lo ! we found whispering in her ear either Mrs. P—— M——, or envy and scandal in her shape ; she vanished at our entrance, but her spirit thundered from the mouth of the ancient oracle ; she fell with all her violence on my complexion, and behold she certainly, by her description, takes my forehead to be tortoise-shell, my cheeks to be gold, my eyes to be onyx, and my teeth amber ; all these are precious things, but Mr. Montagu not having so rich a fancy as King Midas, I know not whether he would like such a wife. Your Grace may believe I was extremely mortified. The good woman says, Mrs. Meadows looks better and younger for being married ; but for me, I am pale and green, and describes me as worse than the apothecary that lives about the rendezvous of death, in Caius Marius. She is of opinion that lying in has spoiled my face ; true it is I have furnished a noble pair of chops to the little boy, and if mine are a little the lanker for it I scarce grudge it. I wish your Grace had been present ; we had many good scenes, but the scene of tenderness and sorrow was the

best of all ; she sighed, and tossed, and thumped, and talked, and blamed, and praised, and hoped, and used the greatest variety of expression, and suffered the greatest change of temper, that ever poor soul did ; most pathetically did she break out, giving an account of Lady Carteret's death ! “ Poor dear Lady Carteret got her death going abroad with a cold ; for if poor dear Lady Carteret had a fault—not that I know that poor dear Lady Carteret had a fault—nay, I believe, poor dear Lady Carteret had not a fault—but, if she had a fault, it was that she loved to dress and go out too well—you know poor dear Lady Carteret did love to dress and go out ; and then, you know, she never spared herself ; she would talk, always talk—but it was to be so, it was ordained that she should die abroad.” All this, yea, and much more, more than mortal memory can register, did she utter in a breath. Had her eloquence had one happy interval for me to have made my honours and escaped, how blest had I been ! but as Mirabell says of Lady Wishfor't, echo must wait till she dies, to catch her last word. I was forced to leave her in the midst of her chat, but I shall resume the thread of her discourse next winter, for, I dare say, it will run on as long as the fatal sisters spin the thread of her life. She asked after your Grace, and gave a very cordial and friendly hum and thump of satisfaction upon hearing you was well. The old woman shewed a love for Miss Carteret, which makes me think she has more goodness than people suspect her of. I shall return to the shades next week. I am much obliged to you for kind enquiry after the young Fidget, who loves laughing and dancing, and is worthy of the mother he sprang from ; thank God, he is very well,

and I am reasonable enough to think so. As for Mrs. Donnellan she is well, Mrs. Delany is better than well. Lady Wallingford came to town on Friday ; I have seen her only according to Peter's phrase in the Drummer, in the shape of the sound of a message.

I am, Madam,  
most gratefully, and affectionately, your  
Grace's obliged and devoted,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, near Newbury, 1743.*

MADAM,

IF I was as good a poet as Boileau I would complain of l'embarrass de Londres, and also of l'embarrass de la campagne, and of the still greater embarrass of travelling from one place to the other. When I had the happiness of your letter I was so encompassed with boxes, trunks, portmanteaus, and even the lesser plague of band-boxes, that I could not give myself the pleasure of writing to your Grace. Bag and baggage we arrived here on Thursday night ; first marched the child crying, nurse singing, and the Abigails talking ; Mr. Montagu, my sister, and myself, brought up the rear. We had fine weather and a pleasant journey ; we took a boat from the inn at Maidenhead-bridge, and rowed round his Grace of Marlborough's island. I had the pleasure of reflecting on the agreeable morning I had spent there with you. I sacrificed a gentle sigh to the manes of the departed day, but thanked the gentle

Fates that spun it so fine, though, like coarser clue, it is now wound up on the common bottom of departed time, which may not again be unravelled. The sylvan deities, the jolly Pan, and the bounteous Ceres, are affrighted from the island by some terrible cannon planted on the borders of it; sad symptoms of the iron age! The halcyon bird did thereupon take his flight, and the portentous raven lives in that sweet bird's forsaken nest; and, since the violation of the silence of this island, Astrea has never ventured so near the court and city. The walnut-trees still thrive, and grow full as fast as the laurels. I think Fame does not, at either end of her trumpet, proclaim the deeds of the heroes abroad. I am of your Grace's opinion, that the rumours of war are terrible; the ambition of the mighty, which "cries havock, and lets slip the dogs of war" upon mankind, is surely greatly sinful. Are we not subject to too many diseases, calamities, and kinds of death by nature, but we must tear each other to pieces, and deal about the arrows of destruction? Oh! that we would keep the covenant of the just, that it might be well with the children of men. I could wish that you had perfect health without interruption, but these colds are bad things. Dr. Courayer dined with us the day before we left town; he was more elated with having a letter from you than he had been dejected with the overthrow of the French; he looks well, and his mind always seems the seat of tranquillity. Donnellan promises to come down here soon; I hope she will stay till I go to London to be inoculated. I am sorry for what you tell me of Lady Wallingford; I fear she is in a very ill state of health. Mrs. Meadows has promised to

take the child while I am sick, and I am best satisfied that it be with her, for I am sure she will take great care of it; and, thank God! it is a very strong healthy child; indeed were he otherwise I should not leave him, for, I think, when they are sickly no one can be tender enough for them but a parent, who feels their little woes, and endeavours to redress them as if they were their own afflictions. Nature gives better lessons to the heart than reflection can, and nature is always in earnest; reason and duty have but their turns. Exalted and refined sentiments do sometimes great things, but natural affection is always present, and therefore the life of the parent is always of infinite consequence to the infant, since no one can take the place of a mother; the tenderness that lives in her, must die with her. Boys, indeed, have soon enough of us, for with the manly habit they often put on a manly contempt of womankind, and at three years old are frequently ashamed of that ensign of our order, a fan; but a drum, more noisy and empty, they honour as a folly of their own kind, and, for what I know, as king-errantry is coming into fashion, it may be the glorious bagatelle of the world; but for us poor women, life will be all a farce and all a ladle still, for I think Lady Carteret's ill success in following the big wars will deter other ladies from adventures abroad. Mrs. B—— is a very good woman, and has excellent sense and wit; but a cast of particularity, with a want of softness in her manners, robs her of the good opinion she would otherwise gain. It is of great consequence to a woman to keep off all disagreeable manners, for the world does not mind our intrinsic worth so much as the fashion of us, and will



not easily forgive our not pleasing. The men suffer for their levity in this case, for in a woman's education little but outward accomplishment is regarded. Some of our sex have an affectation of goodness, others a contempt of it from their education; but the many good women there are in the world are merely so from nature; and, I think, it is much to the honour of untaught human nature, that women are so valuable for their merit and sense. Sure the men are very imprudent to endeavour to make fools of those to whom they so much trust their honour, happiness, and fortune; but it is the nature of mankind to hazard their peace to secure their power; and they know fools make the best slaves. I will write a very very serious, formal letter, as your Grace orders, next post.

I am, Madam,

your Grace's most obliged, and obedient,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

\* *Sandleford*, 1743.

I SHOULD have wrote to your Grace before this time if I could have found time for a long letter, or resolution for a short one, but both were out of my power; this very hour was appointed by the Fates, and this very sheet of paper, no doubt, cut by them for the purpose. I did not leave London so soon as I proposed by a day;

\* *Sandleford* was a priory for Austin canons founded in the year 1200, by Geoffrey Earl of Perche, and Maud his wife.

my brother came to town on purpose to make us a visit, and we put off our journey till Tuesday, on that account. I had a very pleasant journey to this place, where I am much delighted to find every thing that is capable of making retirement agreeable; the garden commands a fine prospect, the most cheerful I ever saw, and not of that distance which is only to gratify the pride of seeing, but such as falls within the humble reach of my eyes. We have a pretty village on a rising ground just before us,

Where the cottage chimney smokes,  
Fast betwixt two aged oaks.

Poverty is there clad in its decent garb of low simplicity, but her tattered robes of misery do not here show want and wretchedness; you would rather imagine pomp was neglected than sufficiency wanted. A silver stream washes the foot of the village; health, pleasure, and refreshment are the ingredients that qualify this spring; no debauch, or intoxication, arises from its source. Nature has been very indulgent to this country, and has given it enough of wood and water; the first we have here in good plenty, and a power of having more of the latter, as improvements are undertaken. Here are great temptations to riding and walking. I go out every evening to take a view of the country; the villages are the neatest I ever saw; every cottage is tight, has a little garden, and is sheltered by fine trees.

Just here was I interrupted by a parson, his wife, and daughter; and I shall not be reconciled to prunello and grogram again a great while; they have robbed

me of those hours I could have dedicated to your Grace. The post goes from hence at two o'clock, it is now past twelve; we are to dine at Mr. Warren's, so I must finish my letter. Oh, sacred leisure! whither art thou retired, since the shades hold thee not? Shall impertinence pierce the sacred recess of the woods dedicated to silence and contemplation? What oracles shall the hallowed oak deliver now every magpie perches and chatters there? I hoped to have passed some days far from the busy hum of men, but society has found me out, and even papers containing rumours of war, with all its pomp, its pride, and circumstance. I know your Grace is glad we have conquered, but while the sun of glory sets in blood I do not desire its beams to shine on us; commerce is our friend.—But I must put an end to my letter. I hope you had a pleasant journey to Welbeck, and that your Grace and all are well.

I am, Madam,  
Your Grace's most devoted,

E. M.

---

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, 6th of July.*

MADAM,

I HAVE often taken up my pen and dipped it in ink, and prepared to dedicate and address its labours to your Grace, and have as often been prevented; and the tide of ink has either been stopped by some accident, or turned from its proper channel to rush through letters of business, or flow in compliments and congratulations,

for of all these I have had many to write lately. Then, Madam, we farmers and housewives have many little cares; a black cloud that threatens the hay, a clap of thunder that may spoil the cream, an east wind that brings blast to our grain, can all darken the imagination, and spoil the conceits of the children of care. I hope your Grace received a great deal of pleasure at Sevenoaks, and found and left your friend in good health. I was unlucky to leave town the day before you returned to it, but so the perverse Fates decreed. Mrs. Donnellan and I had some adventures at the inn, which I think deserve relation; we had spent the fire of our conversation, and were in serious, sober, and deliberate discourse, when Mrs. Ann Walton, who was at the inn, (with the late Mrs. W——, now Mrs. H——,) rushed into the room, let off a volley of compliments on our happy rencontre, expressed a desire to inform us of the pomps and vanities of Mrs. H——'s wedding, the number and richness of her clothes, the quantity, lustre, and form of her jewels; with a most comprehensive et cætera of equipage, servants, plumb-cake seats, and so on. The benevolent communicativeness of her temper, urged her on to describe this with such impetuous speed, such earnest violence, and uninterrupted force, that poor Donn and I could hardly insert a note of admiration; the most we could possibly introduce was Ah! While this vocal music was playing the thorough bass, the door again opened, and let in Mrs. Hassel, the late Lord Stawel's, daughter; she came (as says the poet),

Like light'ning through a cloud,  
Shining bright, and speaking loud,

and with a voice more audible, and discourse more voluble, than the other, went on without interruption, pause, or delay,<sup>r</sup> till Mrs. H—— summoned her to play at commerce. Now for a simile to describe the silence and dulness that appeared on their departure; the blowing off of a whirlwind, the ceasing of thunder, a storm of hail going off in a soft shower, even a conjuror running away with one corner of a house, and leaving the inhabitants of the other in dumb astonishment, and silent fear, are poor emblems, and faint comparisons, of the change that appeared in the room at our inn. We were so amazed and confounded, we stared at each other, and asked whether they were “spirits blest, or goblins damn’d;” wished we had spoken to them; inquired whether they vanished at the crowing of the cock, or the calling of the drawer. At last hearing it was something that had had two husbands, we determined it must be flesh and blood, grew more easy, and drank our tea. I don’t know whether your Grace knows the history of Mrs Hassel; she was handsome and very rich, and married first to a fugitive Papist priest, who dying, she lamented for him so violently, that her grief was soon worn out, and she married a Major Hassel. Mrs. W—— too dispatched her sorrow in a reasonable time, and as soon as she had pulled off the widow’s veil and weeds, put on her bridal garments, and is now gone into Yorkshire with her new husband. Don Quixote could not have devised a better adventure than the meeting these extraordinary persons, in such extraordinary spirits, on so extraordinary an occasion. I think my ancestor, surnamed Crusoe, voyaged through lands unknown to less purpose than I passed through

the turnpike road to Newbury. As nothing suspends the faculties like astonishment, this great amazement so entirely subdued my small capacity, that I have stared without seeing, listened without understanding; and spoke without meaning ever since; this, though not improbable, your Grace may be loth to believe; but as arguments are best illustrated by an example, I will give you a very extraordinary one, and which will entirely convince you of the truth of what I advanced. A few days ago I carried Mrs. Donnellan, and the little Pere, to see Mr. Sloper's gardens and house, at a time when I was assured he was absent on his election; but seeing a man ride up the avenue at the same time, I took it into my head it might be Mr. Sloper, so I did not alight immediately. The housekeeper came to me, and asked if I would walk in; I said I should be glad to see the house if *Mr. Cibber\** was not at home; the housekeeper looked aghast, as if she had spoiled a custard, or broke a jelly glass; I coloured, Mrs. Donnellan twittered, Dr. Courayer sputtered half French half English, and began to search for the case of a spying glass I had dropt in my fright. As my organs of speech, rather than of sight, seemed defective, I was little interested for my perspective, but sat in the coach making melancholy reflections on my mistake. Mrs. Donnellan could not compose her countenance, so that we were near a quarter of an hour before we got out of

\* Mr. Sloper's connection with Mrs. Cibber the actress is well known, as well as the conduct of Theophilus Cibber, her husband, his shameful connivance, and subsequent prosecution for damages.

the coach ; and after so long a pause I walked into the house greatly abashed. However, in the midst of my concern, it gave me some consolation that I could procure your Grace a very salutary and happy fit of laughing, of which I wish you the full benefit and pleasure. If I was not afraid of fatiguing you, I believe I could shake your spleen with a description of Dr. Courayer's figure, when he arrived here from Oxford, through a whole day's rain ; but let it suffice that he shone with drops of water like the diamond ficoides. How his beaver was slouched, his coloured handkerchief twisted, and his small boots stuck to his small legs ; how the rain had uncurled his wig, the spleen dejected his countenance, the cramp spoiled his gait, I shall not describe ; having set you a laughing at myself, it would look like a churlish pride, or *mauvaise-honte*, if I should divert you to any other subject. Mrs. Donnellan and Dr. Courayer join in desiring their best respects and compliments, to your Grace. I hope my Lord Duke, and Mr. Achard, will accept of mine ; and I desire that when you are disposed to laugh at any absurdity, you will not forget mine, who am serious and wise in nothing but in being your Grace's most devoted, sincere, and affectionate humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.**The 2d of Aug.***MADAM,**

I CANNOT tell what motive of curiosity might carry my letter round the world; but had it partaken of the inclinations of its writer. it would have made the best of its way to Bullstrode. I began to be very uneasy at not hearing from your Grace, and formed many fears, which haunted me in ugly shapes, till your letter put them to flight. I told the little Pere\* that you accused him of laziness, and he promises amendment and a letter; he has, I presume, tasted of severer penance than writing to a fair and amiable Dutchess; and, I think, if such are our corrections for his sins, he cannot but be a zealous convert to the church of England. Your Grace owns that you laughed at my blunder about Mr. Cibber, but you do not say that you pitied the confusion that followed it. To have seen how I started, and how I blushed, might have moved pity, I should have thought, in the hardest heart; but though I have told the story, with all its melancholy circumstances, to many charitable and well disposed Christians, I have not seen the least symptom of compassion in them, but many signs of mirth, and unmerciful laughter. Yesterday we went to see a very extraordinary place: a gentleman has built a house on the summit of a prodigious hill, where there is not a drop of water, nor a stick of wood; he has planted some

\* Courayer.



fir-trees, which are watered every day by carts, that bring the water about three miles; he has sunk a well to the centre of the earth, from whence some laborious horses draw him as much water as may wash his face, or, in a liberal hour, supply his tea-kettle; the wind plays about his house in so riotous a manner, that a person must poise themselves in a very exact manner, to maintain their ground, and walk on two legs, with an erect countenance, as it is the glory and pride of human nature to do. I dare say the next generation there, if they are not of an obstinate temper, will walk on all four. The soil in this place is so barren that there is hardly a blade of grass to be seen; and the poor sheep that wander about must change their vegetable for animal food, devour each other, and dine on mutton, like their betters. The first house this gentleman built was in a bottom, where the ground was all wet and marshy, overgrown with willows and alders, and extremely peopled with frogs; there he found himself ill at ease, and, no doubt but in time, would have died of a dropsy, as I now fear he will be destroyed by the wind cholic. But, in the mean time, I wish he may do something for the good of mankind, and make use of his situation, so adapted thereto, in improving weather-cocks and windmills. A few days ago we were at Miss Lisle's wood and grotto, the work of nine sisters, who in disposition, as well as number, bear some resemblance to the Muses.

On Monday we think of going to Lady Fane's grôtto, at Basildon, of which I will give your Grace the best account I can. One who bears so true a respect to

every individual shell, cannot but truly venerate a number of them happily met together, and therefore I will give your Grace a particular description of them; I mean of their appearance; as to their names, unless I had their godfather Shaw with me, I shall not be able to tell them. Mrs. Donnellan and I are going to make a shell frame for a looking-glass; I think a looking-glass to be properest for the first work, as every body will be sure to find something they like in it; indeed I should be afraid of showing this piece of work to you, who forget and neglect yourself to give attention to any thing else; but I do not so fear your criticism as not to wish you were to dress your head in it; and must I never hope for the happiness of seeing your Grace here! Let me have a promise under your hand for next summer.

I am  
ever your Grace's most devoted,  
E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

1743.

MADAM,

I AM pleased to think this letter will find your Grace in the regions of liberty and pleasure, free from all the chains and shackles of ceremony and constraint. To have our actions regulated by little precise forms, and our words turned to the tune of other people's opinions, takes away all the comfort of life. All inquisition into a person's actions or opinions, more than

they choose to declare, is of a very tyrannous nature; and a peevish opposition to the opinions they do declare, is very opposite to the end of conversation. It is from this reason there is little charity among different sects; we are not angry that our neighbour is in the wrong, but that he thinks us so. Were the liberty to dissent allowed without mark or notice, we should scarce know there was any difference of opinion among men. It would be very ridiculous if all the squinting people in the world were to profess enmity to the rest of the world, or be treated as enemies, because they cannot make their eyes meet on the same point that others, not liable to that infirmity, do. If we direct our steps aright, why should we quarrel about the land-marks that direct us? Peace on earth, and good will towards men, was the wish of Divine benevolence; would we endeavour to follow it, how happy would be every private family in their little system, and how much so the world in general! But it is so much the custom amongst us to plague each other, that were it not for some particular friendships, where the desire to oblige and make easy is prevalent, and the foundation of the happy commerce and union, this life would be a warfare none but the contentious could maintain. I was in hopes to have heard when you would come to town; I wish you may come up to us soon after the twenty-fourth of this month, which is the time I propose for going to London for the inoculation. I think there is no danger of hot weather after the middle of September; Dr. Mead says it is the best time for me; so, I hope, nothing will prevent my being in town as I propose. It would be an inexpressi-

ble joy to me to meet you there. I will write to Lady Andover so long a letter she shall have the fear of my pen before her eyes as long as she lives. Matlock must be well worth seeing; we have nothing here of the wild and uncultivated sort. I intend to go and indulge reveries at an old castle, where Chaucer made his faries gambol with as much grace and prettiness as the Muses of old on the hill of Parnassus: the castle is on a rising, just above Newbury, and commands a pretty view of the country. The prospect is of sufficient extent to let the poetic fancy rove at pleasure among the beauties of nature. Pray where is Pen? Will she produce a sprig of bays? It must be a little Master Apollo, or a Miss Minerva, from parents of such art and science. I have sent your Grace a copy of a letter Lord Orford sent to General Churchill; if ever he was to be envied it was when he wrote that letter. It seems to come from a mind pleased with every thing about it, and easy in itself amidst the refinements of luxury and expence, without the madness of intemperance, or inconveniences of prodigality; but, with all his elegance, I do not think he shews true taste, as a lover and friend of human kind, who has sacrificed his vanity, and subjected his avarice to the public good. The sweetest music is well deserved praise, and an untainted heart the best possession, and to live in the esteem of good people is the fairest abode. All the adornments of vice are but like the pomp and state of a funeral; the shew pleases for a minute, till we remember it is only celebrating the misery and misfortune of human kind, and hiding under pomp the corruption of our fellow-creature. I hope this letter will

find you well, and the dear little ones safe, at Bullstrode ; these little creatures add to our care ; but how unhappy are they who have nothing worth caring for ! My little boy will cost me a sigh at parting ; it is a great pleasure to me to see him gathering strength every day, and I hope making a provision of health for years to come.

I am,  
my dearest Lady Dutchess's  
very affectionate, and sincere friend, and  
grateful humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

\* \* Mrs. Montagu was inoculated this year without success.

*To the Same.*

Dec. 8, 1743.

MADAM,

I MAY now wish your Grace joy of my Lord Duke's recovery, which indeed has been happy to the greatest degree after so bad an accident. You have put me into a sufficient fright about Mrs. Delany ;\* by what you say, I suspect I directed my letter to Mrs. Pendarvis. I think myself the more capable of it, because, at Allerthorpe, when I wrote to acquaint my mother I could not take a journey to town because I was breeding, I signed myself Robinson, though really, while I wore that name, I do not remember I was ever in the

\* Mrs. Pendarvis married Dr. Delany, the friend of Swift, 9th of June, 1743.

like condition. I cannot tell what to say to Mrs. Delany about this mistake. I am sure I approved the match; and consented with my whole heart, but for this slip of the pen I cannot account; perhaps it might happen from the fright I was in for the Duke; I am sure Mr. Drummond could not be in a greater fright when he saw all the Hanoverians in a panic. I want to know whether the Secretary confessed his sins in his fear; for if a fright can make a minister forget his hypocrisy, well may it make me forget a name. I hope you found Lady Oxford well at Salt Hill. I sigh, whenever I pass by Slough, to think of the days I have seen. I find the power of Bullstrode mighty still, and ever grieve to think I pass by it without calling. I hear her Grace of Kent did me the honour to ask a great many civil questions after me of Mrs. Meadows. I design to go to visit the old dragon as soon as I come to town. I am afraid Mr. Montagu's continuing to vote against the ministry will hurt my complexion as bad as another lying in. I have been petrifying my brains over a most solid and ponderous performance of a woman in this neighbourhood. Having always a love to see Phœbus in petticoats, I borrowed a book, written by an ancient gentlewoman skilled in Latin, dipt in Greek, and absorbed in Hebrew, besides a modern gift of tongues. By this learned person's instruction was Dr. Pocock (her son) skilled in antique lore, while other people are learning to spell monosyllables. But Hebrew being the mother tongue, you know, it is no wonder he learnt it. His gingerbread was marked with Greek characters, and his bread and butter, instead of glass windows, was printed with Ara-

bic. He had a mummy for his jointed baby, and a little pyramid for his play-house. His copybook was filled with hieroglyphics; and nothing modern and vulgar could be employed in the education of this learned woman's son. Mrs. Pocock lives in a village very near us, but has not visited here, so I have not had an opportunity to observe her conversation; but really I believe she is a good woman, though but an indifferent author. She amuses herself in the country so as to be cheerful and sociable at threescore, is always employed either in reading, working, or walking; and I do not hear that she is pedantic. What use she makes of her Hebrew, I cannot tell; but it is a strange piece, not of female, but of male curiosity, to learn it. I am told she always carries a Greek or Hebrew bible to church. I desire your Grace to make ten thousand apologies for me to Mrs. Delany, if it is really true that I would have robbed her of a good name; but I hope you only said this to put me in terrors. I desire my best compliments to her and Dr. Delany, to whom I wish very well, though I have offered the shadow of a great injury in seeming to deprive them of each other. I send my friendly love to dear Donnellan, my sincere good wishes to my Lord Duke for recovering his mischief, and to the little ones that they keep free from all harm. I congratulate Mr. Achard upon the Duke's recovery, and to Mr. Drummond I wish a perseverance in mirth, wit, and good humour. I am ever your Grace's most devoted

E. M.

*To Mrs. Donnellan.**Sandleford, December 15, 1743.*

DEAR FRIEND,

YOUR letters always give me great pleasure ; and in my resolution of not writing, the Dutchess of Portland and you are excepted. It is indeed sincerely true that the posture does not agree with me, and, as true, that I am tired of leading the life of a scribbler, for in much writing there is some trouble and no improvement. You are very kind in your concern for my health ; I am now better ; I have not suffered much, though my nerves have sometimes played their leger-de-main with me ; but their dark magic, working upon the mind, has not yet encircled me. I have as few fears as most people ; nor has my heart any sorrows real or imaginary. I have spent my time, during the last fortnight, not much to my mind ; I am not one of those choice exalted spirits that want no assistance from society ; it is my infirmity that I cannot live without an agreeable companion, and my misfortune to find in few people the qualities that please me. Morose could not be more miserable at a puppet show, or a ballad opera, than I am in some company ; so that I frequently cannot avoid solitude without falling into worse punishment. I can bear twenty disagreeable people at a time, but sicken at a tête-à-tête with one whom I dislike. I expect my brother Morris here on the 20th, my sister on the 23d, with Mrs. Cotes, and Mr. and Mrs. Freind, whom, to my great grief, I shall not be able to keep long. Mr. Montagu hopes to come



here the end of this week, but I fear he may not be spared from his attendance on the House. The papers say his Wisdom, squire S——, is made a peer; he will surely be as genteel a man of quality as he is an able minister; and Madam D——, with her cares of the nation, will make an admirable Countess; she is genteel enough for a lady of the bedchamber to Huncamunca, or the boisterous queen of the Philistines. I wish much I could see her presented at court for this new honour. I thought Fortune had raised his Wisdom for the jest of a day, but I find the joke is to last longer. In ancient times people were made great because they had served their country, now they become so by hurting it. I wish I had one half of you here; I would not take all of you from so agreeable a society as you are in, but I hope we shall get a quiet season in the country together. I have laid your kiss upon a rosy cheek; the little man is very well, and thanks you for your present; he will do as much for you when he is bigger.

I am, dear Madam,  
most affectionately your's,

E. M.

---

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind,*

*March the 3d, 1744.*

**MOST EXCELLENT COUSINS,**

L'EMBARRAS DE LONDRES is such it really leaves one no leisure for any thing right, reasonable, friendly, and comfortable; all that Boileau says in rhyme against

Fembarras de Paris I think, in plain prose, of this troublesome town; but the poets have a great advantage over poor prose mortals; a strong expression or a bold metaphor is with us harsh and rude; prose satire seems abusive, and a complaint is called scolding; while, in rhyme, the poet sings so sweetly we are soothed with his dumps, instructed by his chiding, and half pleased with his abuse. We got to Dover-street on Monday, before it was dark, though we did not set out from Sandleford till after seven. As soon as Aurora, with her rosy fingers, unbarred the gates of light, so soon, and no sooner, did Betty, the lean maid, unbar our wooden shutter, and undraw our camblet window curtain, with her red hands, chopt with the work of many a well washed day. But, after we had shaken off sleep, it was no such easy matter to part with little Punch, with whom we played and pleased ourselves as long as we could afford time, then went to Reading, and there took a post chaise, like bold demoiselles errantes. The boy blew the horn, and away we went with some signs of importance, our haste signifying we were people much wanted somewhere, and who had no time to throw away. Fortune, who favours the bravery of men, looked enviously at our female courage; and, perhaps, alarmed to see wheels that turned faster than her own, did very uncivilly lay some stumbling block in the way of one of our chaise horses; down he fell, prostrate in the dust; the ladies errant dismounted; a mob gathered round them; however, the untaught multitude pitied and assisted them; in the mean time drove by a coach of polite people, who had not the humanity to ask what assistance was wanted;

however, we got into our chaise, and away we went with great spirit. At Hounslow our own chaise and horses met us. We were not sorry, at the end of our journey, to get into an easy vehicle ; much we rejoiced at its pleasanter motion ; when our coachman, inspired with pride, by which cometh contention, and by contention disaster, runs a race with a coach and four, and overturns us ; so, I must tell you, having no Voiture to say it for me, nous nous trouvons toujours sur nos pieds, and accordingly found ourselves no worse, but, after all adventures, were brought safe to our good friend in Dover street, where we forgot all evils and accidents ; for, as Sir W. Temple says, whom I am just reading, and therefore happen to remember, a friend is the medicine of life. And now I am sitting in my easy chair with that ease and dignity one feels after remembrance of high achievements and great fatigues. Mr. Montagu had proposed coming to us on the Saturday, finding nothing of consequence was coming on in the Parliament-house, but my letter informing him of our design of being in London on Monday, that my sister might be ready to go down with my father, made him defer his journey. We shall take the first opportunity of going down to the little man when there is nothing of importance going forward in the Parliament-house. We were very impatient for your letter, having a thousand fears for Mrs. Freind, and great anxiety about your children. Your letter I delivered to the amiable Dutchess ; she was much pleased with it, and, I assure you, she thinks of you as you deserve. How came Mrs. Freind to be taken for a parrot ? she has less of the parrot than any woman in the world ; a parrot is the very reverse

of her character ; but I assure you I know a great many parrots ; I met four, in a visit yesterday, with an ancient magpie for their chaperon. You wonder I say nothing of public news perhaps ; but we are all gaping with curiosity, and there is no intelligence to inform us, nor invention to amuse us ; there has not even been a false rumour these three days ; one would think truth and discretion prevailed, but those who have the happiness of keeping a great deal of good company know the contrary. I am glad our coach-horses performed your journey well ; I hope every thing that belongs, in any manner, to me, is at the service of my friends. I cannot take to myself any praise for asking for the company I much esteem, nor for taking all the care in my power of one I love and value like my cousin Grace. I thought my sister must have gone to Horton on Monday, but we have a reprieve for a few days, I fear for less than a week ; she is now at the play. We were at the ridotto on Thursday ; it was very disagreeable, every individual was dull, and altogether they were troublesome ; while I was gaping and yawning, I heard people crying “ This is a charming ridotto ! ” A disposition to be pleased is a great happiness. I wish I had more pleasure in a crowd for fear I should grow too retired ; when fancy loses a pleasurable toy, it is well if reason substitutes something of more solid contentment in its place ; but really the world affords little enough of happiness, even if we take the serious and comic into the account. I believe the domestic happiness I enjoy makes me indifferent to the trifles abroad, which can bear no comparison with the pleasure and felicity of living with those one loves and esteems ; and,

for amusement, no puppet-show is like the pleasant humours of my own punch at Sandlesford. I hope my god-daughter will get quite rid of her complaints; many have fits at her age, and get well through them. I am your's and my dear cousin's most obedient servant, and most sincere friend,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Dover-street, the 14th of March, 1744.*

**MOST EXCELLENT COUSIN,**

IT is a terrible thing to be self-convicted. I am so sensible I am in the wrong, that I think it presumption to imagine an apology can do me any service, so take the truth as it is. I have been a little idle, and a great deal out of health. I was so pestered with a cough I could not write, nor do any thing, but loll in an easy chair. No sooner was I able to stir out, but looking in that roll of courtesy, called a visiting-book, I found myself such a debtor to ceremony it was the business of my life to get clear of those obligations: and cards fly about that, like the leaves of the Sibyls of old, prescribe the actions, and mark the fate of every day. I was summoned to a drum at Mrs. Manwaring's, where I saw my cousin, Septimus Robinson,\* dressed as gay as a lover; but whether that was the footing he was upon I do not know. I am ashamed I did not acknowledge the receipt of the Bath water; my mother thinks her soul

\* Afterwards Sir Septimus Robinson, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod.

in peril of purgatory till she has paid for it ; for charity's sake make her easy upon that head ; and that I may have a comfortable conscience also, be so good as to pay Miss Grinfield for two feather tippets she bought for me. The Dutchess of Portland would have taken it ill if you had not wrote to her. She communicated your last letter to me, and seemed much pleased with it. We never cease to make honourable mention of you. I wish I knew what people at Bath expect and desire to hear from their friends in London ; would you hear news, politics, scandal, or what ? Suppose I blend them together, and give you political-censorious news ; I think that must please all palates ; there are few who have not some relish of either novelty, business, or satire ; the first will please the young, whose passion is curiosity, and their delight surprize ; the second suits the middle-aged, who are engaged very deeply in worldly pursuits ; the third will best amuse those who have found the sin and vanity that waits on business and pleasure. After all my promises of such variety, I do not know how to pick up one article of either news, politics, or scandal. The malecontents, and enemies of the constitution, agree we have the best regulated *ridottos* in Europe ; those who do not honour K—— G——, admire King Lear ; and however they may disapprove Lord Granville, they declare Garrick to be an incomparable actor. Some who think the exchequer ill-managed, and profess the court wants dignity, live in hopes of the prettiest puppet-show that ever was seen. And indeed both those who were for insisting upon the Dutch coming into the war, and they of the contrary opinion, all agree that the Dutch children

are the worst rope dancers and tumblers that ever they saw. Lestock and Matthews are now examined before the Parliament as to their conduct in the Mediterranean; and, it is said by some who have read it, that Thompson's new play is equal to Otway's Orphan, and Rowe's Fair Penitent; in short, it is amazing how serious and how merry, how idle and how busy, this town is. In the morning all throng to the senate-house, and at night to the play-house. Those who bewail the poverty of the nation in the morning, part with gold for two hours entertainment at the oratorio at night. Those who talk of faction, did they but see how full of powder, and how empty of thought, the heads of the hydra appear to be, they would fear nothing from so spruce a set of senators. I think the town was never so gay or so fond of amusements. If you expect I should tell you any thing important in the way of news, it is impossible; all is so blended with pleasure and gaiety, that the happiness of the nation, and the success of the puppet-show, are talked of in the same moment. My sister is much obliged to you and Mrs. Freind for your letters. Pray don't forget to set my mother's conscience at rest about this Bath water.

I am, my good friend,  
 your's with great esteem and sincerity,  
 ELIZ. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, July 1, 1744.*

**MOST EXCELLENT COUSIN,**

**INDOLENCE deprives me of half the pleasures of life**

It is amazing, that having pen, ink, and leisure, I should not have wrote to you this month, though there has not a day passed of that month in which I have not thought of you with esteem and regard, love of your conversation, and desire of your correspondence. When I had the pleasure of your letter it served me as salvolatile and hartshorn, and saved one fee, at least, to the doctor, as well as a phial of drops at the apothecary's. I was really a good deal out of health when your letter came to my hands. I had a very violent cold, or a moderate fever, I am not critic enough in maladies to know which ; however, a few days set me at ease, and a few more brought me to the happiness a mother finds in the company of her child, and that which every reasonable creature must find in the enjoyment of the country at this agreeable and delightful season. I am at a great loss to know what obligations you have to me ; I can recollect none, though you seem to think you have. Is the world really so bad that it is become an obligation if we love those qualities we admire, and do not envy perfections we cannot attain ? If so, you are really very much obliged to me ; for I take pleasure in your virtues, rejoice in your successes, wish prosperity to all your undertakings ; I am interested for your children, and am in love with your wife as much as you are ; your happiness makes a part of mine, and your excellent conduct a part of my good conscience ; so nearly am I interested for you, and my dear cousin Grace. I often think how happily you must pass your time in the groves at Witney ; sometimes contemplating the order of the universe, and beauty of the creation, with that dignity of reasoning which becomes phi-



losophers; then gently inclining to human affections, and admiring Master Bobby on his hobby horse, and Miss with her coral. I rejoice at the recovery of her health; I know the joy there is in seeing these tender objects of one's care thriving well, and increasing in health and strength. Punch is a fine fellow; he is greatly improved since you saw him; he is now an admirable tumbler; I lay him down on a blanket on the ground every morning before he is dressed, and at night when he is stripped, and there he rolls and tumbles about to his great delight; and I assure you it makes him very nimble, and I think it is a good practice; and if my god-daughter is not a prude, I would recommend the same practice to her, provided also that she be not apt to take cold. I hope you will not be too much surprized if you hear I have learned to lisp, and cannot walk securely without a leading-string; I keep company with my child till I fancy I shall grow like one. However, I cannot help giving myself up to the joys of the heart, and, immersed in parental felicity, I envy neither the refined pleasures of the modern Dilettanti, nor the ancient Epicureans; provided I have the delight and joy of the heart, I cannot complain if I am not made for higher pleasures. I expect my happiness from natural affections; the pleasures of contemplation are made for the few, the joys of the heart are known to all, and are not ingrafted on science, nor need to be cultivated by art. I spoke to the Dutchess of P. that you had desired me to enquire where the fleams were had, that I might pay for them; she desired you would accept them, and said it was a trifle. I am sorry I can-

not be so happy as to wait on you this summer at Witney, but we are bound for the north.

I am, my dear Sir, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

*Newbold Verdon, August 9, 1744.*

MADAM,

I DID not set out on my journey so soon as we proposed; the letter we sent to my brother Montagu having made the tour of England before it reached him, so we waited for an answer. The thirty-first of July we set out for Oxford; where we spent an agreeable day in seeing new objects and old friends. The good people from Witney were so kind as to come over to see us, and showed us what was best worth our attention. The University, I think, is finer than that at Cambridge, but does not excel so much as I had imagined; Alma Mater however presides in great dignity there. I had hoped to have seen Mr. Potts, but was informed he was at Bullstrode, or I should have sent to have begged the favour of seeing him. The mighty Shaw had left the classic ground to take care of his glebe in the country. The first of August we went to Stowe, which is beyond description; it gives the best idea of Paradise that can be: even Milton's images and descriptions fall short of it; and indeed a Paradise it must be to every mind in a state of tolerable innocence. Without the soul's sunshine every object is dark; but a contented mind, in so sweet a situation, must feel the most

“sober certainty of waking bliss.” The buildings are indeed, in themselves, disagreeably crowded, but being dedicated to patriots, heroes, law-givers, and poets, and men of ingenuity and invention, they receive a dignity from the persons to whom they are consecrated. Others, that are sacred to imaginary powers, raise a pleasing enthusiasm in the mind. What different ideas arise in a walk in Kensington gardens, or the Mall, where almost every face wears impertinence! the greater part of them unknown, and those whom we are acquainted with, only discover to us that they are idle, foolish, vain, and proud. At Stowe you walk amidst heroes and deities, powers and persons, whom we have been taught to honour; who have embellished the world with arts, or instructed it in science: defended their country, and improved it. The temples that pleased me most, for the design to which they were consecrated, were those to Ancient Virtue, to Friendship, to the Worthies, and to Liberty. On Saturday last we arrived at my brother Montagu’s; who has made this place one of the most charming and pleasant I ever saw; the gardens are delightful, the park very beautiful, the house neat and agreeable, and every thing about it in an elegant taste. My brother has made great improvements. It was a very bad place when Lord Crewe left it to him, and had no ornament but fine wood; now there is water in great beauty, grand avenues from every point, fine young plantations, and in short every thing that can please the eye. But nothing gives me so much pleasure as the obliging and friendly reception of the master, who has entertained us in a kind, an elegant, and magnificent manner. It is

delightful to observe the regularity and order of the family, and the happiness that appears in the countenance of every friend and servant. We shall see T—— in our way; but I take little delight in those shades from whence Astrea has been chased. I look upon the oaks that shade a virtuous owner as a kind of temple to innocence; but when persons of another character take sanctuary there, I look on them only as canopies for luxury and idleness.

I am, Madam, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*York, August, 1744.*

I AM NOW writing to you from the very place from whence I began my journey of life. You will think that I may feel some uneasiness on the reflection of returning to this place, after so many years wandering through the world, with so little improvement and addition of merit, which is all that time leaves behind it. Too true it is that reflection has given some pain, and cost me a sigh or two; but it is some comfort that my blank page has not been blotted with the stains of vice; if any good deeds shall ever be written there they will be legible, and suffer no various interpretations even from critics. Twenty-two years and ten months ago I was just the age my son is now: as his way through life will lie through the high roads of ambition and pleasure, he will hardly pass so unspotted, but, I hope,

a better informed, traveller than I have done through my little private path. His account will consist of many articles, pray God the balance may be right ! I would have him think joy is for the pure of heart, and not giddily sacrifice the smallest part of integrity in hope of making large amends by deeds of estimation. But thus it is always with his sex, and a man thinks it is no more necessary to be as innocent as a woman, than to be as fair. Poor little man, may heaven protect him ! I wish he may be of as contented a spirit at the same age as his mother ; and that his cheerfulness too may arise, not from love of himself, but from the possession of good and amiable friends. I would, to this purpose, wish him as many brothers, but I have some private objections arising from self-love against that wish, so I will leave that to his merit and discernment, which to me has arisen from accident. I ought to have epistolized you before I came so near the end of my journey, but we filled up our time with seeing all the places that lay within our route ; the first was Oxford, which you know so well I shall say nothing about it, nor would the Muses permit my grey goose quill to describe their sacred haunt. From thence we went to Stowe, of which so much has been said and written, I shall only tell you how I was affected by the gardens, of which probably neither verse nor prose writer would ever inform you. It is indeed a princely garden, more like, I believe, to that where the sapient King held dalliance with his fair Ægyptian spouse, than to Paradise,—its beauties are the effects of expense and taste ; the objects you see are various, yet the result is not variety. Lord Cobham has done by his garden as kings

do by their subjects, made difference by title and artificial addition, where nature made none; yet altogether it is a pleasing scene, where a philosophic mind would enjoy full happiness, the disappointed ambitious some consolation. The buildings are many of them censured by connoisseurs as bad, however, their intention and use is good; they are, for the most part, dedicated to the memory of the wise, the good, and great, so they raise in the ambitious a noble emulation, in the humble a virtuous veneration; kinds of homage that mend the heart that pays them. From Stow we went to my brother Montagu's in Leicestershire, where we passed a week very agreeably. The next place we saw was T——; the house is large, but the company it has of late received makes one see it with prejudice; the luxury of a hog-stye must be disgusting; indeed I was glad to get out of the house, every creature in it, and every thing one saw was displeasing; as to the park, it wants nature's cheerful livery, the sprightly green; the famous cascade did not please me, who have seen some made by the bounteous hand of nature, to which man's magnificence is poor and *chétive*. From hence we came to York, where we have just been viewing the cathedral; of all the Gothic buildings I ever saw, the most noble, taken together, or considered in parts. Gothic architecture, like Gothic government; seems to make strength and power of resistance its chief pride; this noble cathedral looks as if it might defy the consuming power of all-devouring Time. We are to visit the fine assembly room before we leave York, which, I hear, is built in the manner of an Egyptian hall, or banquetting room. Dr. Shaw would tell us in what place:

Cleopatra would have chosen to sit. I must put an end to my letter, which has been something in the style of the raree-show man, "you shall see what you shall see."

I am, dear Madam,  
your most sincere, and faithful  
humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

*Allerthorp, Sep. 16, 1744.*

I AM much obliged to my dear friend for her tender concern for me ; I would have wrote to you before, but I could not command my thoughts so as to write what might be understood. I am well enough as to health of body, but God knows, the sickness of the soul is far worse ; however, as so many good friends interest themselves for me, I am glad I am not ill. I know it is my duty to be resigned and to submit ; many, far more deserving than I am, have been as unfortunate.\* I hope time will bring me comfort, I will assist it with my best endeavours ; it is in afflictions like mine that reason ought to exert itself, else one should fall beneath the stroke. I apply myself to reading as much as I can, and I find it does me service. Poor Mr. Montagu shews me an example of patience and fortitude, and endeavours to comfort me, though undoubtedly he feels as much

\* Her son died of convulsion fits from cutting his teeth.

sorrow as I can do, for he loved his child as much as ever parent could do. My sister has been of great service to me; and on this, as on all other occasions, a most tender friend. I am much obliged to you for wishing yourself with so unhappy a companion; your conversation would be a cordial to my spirits, but I should be afraid of being otherwise to your's. Adieu; think of me as seldom as you can, and when you do, remember I am patient, and hope that the same Providence that snatched this dear blessing from me may give me others; if not, I will endeavour to be content if I may not be happy. Heaven preserve you, and your dear precious babes; thank God! you are far removed from my misfortune, and hardly can fear to be bereft of all.

I am,  
 ever your Grace's most affectionate,  
 E. M.

---

THE two volumes now published form a small part of a series of letters which have been returned, at different periods, during the life of Mrs. Montagu, and since her death, by the executors of the correspondents to whom they were addressed. It is a strong presumption of the estimation in which the letters were held, that they should have been all preserved by her friends from the early age of eleven years to the advanced period of eighty. On no occasion did she write foul copies, or keep copies of them, and very seldom did she



recollect to affix a date. This omission has been, in some measure, supplied by the attention of a few of her correspondents to keep them in order, particularly by the Dutchess of Portland, who added the date in pencil, in many cases, and caused them to be pasted in a book; but the greatest part of the whole series has been arranged only by an observation of their contents, and a consideration of the political events, or other circumstances, mentioned in them. The confusion in which they were found, and the difficulty of the arrangement, will not be easily conceived.

They would have been sooner offered to the public notice, if the Editor, in the eagerness to discharge a duty so delightful to his feelings, had not been induced to persevere, with two little intermission, in the labour of the arrangement; and, by this means, to encrease to an alarming degree a weakness of sight, which other circumstances had previously occasioned. The publication is here termed a duty, because it was frequently enjoined by Mrs. Montagu herself in consequence of the reiterated request of many of her correspondents, upon whose taste and judgment she had every reason to rely. Lord Lyttleton and Lord Bath in particular, her favourite friends, will be found in the course of the correspondence strongly and repeatedly urging their future publication, as considering that they exhibit the fertility and versatility of her powers of understanding, and the excellence of her disposition, in a more complete manner than any other species of composition. The same opinion, and the same request, was expressed by many eminent persons, in which number I shall only mention Dr. Young, Mr. Gilbert West, Lord Chatham,

Mr. Garrick, Mr. Stillingfleet, Lord Kaimes and Dr. Beattie, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. Burke, Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Vesey.

The early letters, now presented to the public, afford certainly an unfavourable specimen, if they are considered merely with a view to correctness of composition, or as models of epistolary style. They are frequently defective in these particulars, and these defects have not been softened by the editor, as he has thought it more fair to exhibit a real portrait than an imaginary resemblance. He has struck out many insignificant passages relating to private concerns, and many anecdotes and observations of a personal nature; but he is sensible that on most occasions when he has been induced most largely to suppress, the letters have suffered materially in their appearance of originality and of familiar ease.

It is hoped that the reader will constantly bear in mind the early age of the writer, the less cultivated state of the education of women at that period, and the gaiety of familiar intercourse between girls accustomed to the dissipation of the fashionable world. An acknowledged superiority in wit and beauty may be allowed at so early an age to excite some sparks of vanity, and to give delight in the scenes best adapted to display the pre-eminence so largely bestowed by nature. But when it is found, in the future remaining volumes, that she became in her middle age as remarkable for discretion of conduct, and propriety of demeanour, as she had been in her childhood and youth for vivacity and sprightliness; the progress of her disposition will appear to be no less interesting than the improvement of her taste,

and the enlargement of her faculties. She was an exemplary wife to a man much older than herself, and proved herself worthy to be the bosom friend of a husband whose strict honour and integrity, as a gentleman, and a member of Parliament, were not less conspicuous than his unwearied diligence, and deep research as a man of science.

We shall find her to be the most approved friend of the wisest and best men of her age, as well as the most admired companion of the wittiest. Her conversation was sought by all who were distinguished for learning, for politeness, or for any of the qualities which give lustre, or dignity, or influence. The scholar and the statesman were alike desirous of her society; and she was so fortunate as to acquire the esteem and attachment of men who united both characters. She was permitted to entwine her myrtle with the bays of the poet, to share the counsels of the politician, and to estimate the works of the historian, the critic, and the orator. She subdued her propensity to satire; and if her wit was so abundant by nature as to be inextinguishable, she found means so to temper its lustre, that it should no longer dazzle by its brightness, or excite apprehension of a mischievous consequence. In her youth her beauty was most admired in the peculiar animation and expression of her blue eyes, with high arched dark eye-brows, and in the contrast of her brilliant complexion with her dark brown hair. She was of the middle stature, and stooped a little, which gave an air of modesty to her countenance, in which the features were otherwise so strongly marked as to express an elevation of sentiment befitting the most exalted condition.

As she advanced in age, her appearance was distinguished by that superiority of demeanour which is acquired by the habit of intercourse with persons of the most cultivated talents and the most polished manners. Her very look bespoke the fire of genius, arising from strength of understanding, refinement of taste, and solidity of judgment. If to these qualifications we add the soundness of principle, the tenderness of benevolence, and the calm piety of her latter years, we shall behold a picture of an individual who might be justly termed an ornament to her sex and country.

The reader has some distance to travel before he arrives at the period in which Mrs. Montagu attained her greatest perfection in epistolary writing. The Editor will be excused if he entertains a hope that the reader will then be induced to allow that few persons in any language can be thought to surpass her in this species of composition.

The remaining part of the series will be published by degrees, as the health and leisure of the Editor will admit, and as the curiosity of approbation of the public may seem to require.

---

☞ [The London edition of Mrs. Montagu's Letters and from which this is printed, is in four volumes. The preceding letters form the two first—and the subsequent the two last volumes—the latter appeared some years after the first were published.]

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.**Allerthorpe, October 26th, 1744.*

DEAR COUSIN,

I HAD the favour of your kind letter this morning, and resolved to return immediate thanks for it, that I might have a kind of right to such another. You see the grounds of human gratitude, it is one of the social virtues; that is, a duty towards another practised for the good of oneself; but, however, believe me to be as good as the generality of my species, and that if I excel in any particular, it is in loving my friends. It is no wonder that a mind weakened and bowed by affliction seeks to support itself by the assistance of others; but in my happiest hours, and when the delusions of life (for I call the happiness of this world no better) were strongest upon me, I thought friendship had high and noble pleasures. I am pleased with what you say of my Dutchess; I think she is an honour to our sex, and a happiness to her friends. Every thing of this world is of a mortal nature, but I hope our friendship will not cease to exist till we do. What you say of the other person gives me concern; I really love her, but if I find by you that she does not deserve it, I will endeavour to withdraw my esteem; for a false friend, or even a slight one, is a dangerous thing. True and faithful affection is a pearl not to be cast before the profane. I wish you had hinted your reasons; but I will wait till I see you, and in the mean time my affection will be balanced between the loadstone of inclination to find her right, and the attrac-

tion of your opinion, which in those things we have conversed upon has had such force of truth as to draw mine. What an abominable vice is hypocrisy! it often makes falsehood appear amiable, and teaches us to distrust truth; it has perhaps made me take this woman to be good, and may make me suspect some better person of hypocrisy. I have often observed that the generality of young people are madly credulous, and old ones injuriously suspicious, which arises in the first from indolence and rashness, in the latter it is the effect of timorousness, and of having been often deceived. The natural shocks that flesh is heir to, are so many, it is inexcusable in mankind to add to them by their ill treatment of each other. Happiness opens the heart to benevolence, affliction softens it for pity. Heaven grant that however my heart may be afflicted, it may never be corrupted! and as I should abhor deceit in myself, I would avoid it in others. I am fortunate in some friends, (and I hope you will know I reckon you as one of them) whose hearts I know full of integrity. I am sure you will think it must have been a great consolation to me to have discovered all those virtues in Mr. Montagu which adversity needs, and adversity only can shew. I never saw such resignation and fortitude in any one; and in the midst of affliction there is comfort in having such a friend and assistant. It was once my greatest happiness to see him in possession of the dearest of blessings; it is now my greatest comfort to see he knows how to resign it, and yet preserve the virtue and dignity of his temper. He went to London on Tuesday, about some

business that required his immediate presence. If the Parliament sits early next month I shall go to town in a few days.

I am, dear Sir, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.*

*Dover-street, 1745.*

DEAR SIR,

I AM in doubt whether to thank you for your letter, or chide you for your departure; the first gave me much pleasure, the latter a great deal of regret. To show you that while you are bounding your ambition to making your family happy, others have different views. I will tell you what strange things are doing in our political world. My sister sent you word of the comedy at St. James's, and the *excunt omnes* of our ministry, and all their adherents. An interlude was played by Lord Granville, and the famed Earl of Bath, Lord Carlisle, and Lord Winchelsea; but, to act exactly according to the rules of criticism, their theatrical performance was confined to the space of twenty-four hours; at the expiration of that time they made their exit, and the Pelhams, and their followers, are again on the great stage. It seems the ministry had discovered a scheme of Lord G—lle's, as soon as the supplies were raised, to carry the K—— abroad, and turn all out of their places, and to bring in his own creatures and himself to manage affairs. As the Pelhams knew money was the hinge of government, and that by throwing things into confusion before this same

powerful gold was obtained, they should ruin Lord G——'s schemes, they all resigned, declaring that while he was behind the curtain they could do nothing. Lord G—— took the seals, and was preparing to come forward, but Lord Bath's usual irresolution took him, and he withdrew his assistance. Without men there was no getting money, without money no getting men. The K—— asked to see his Lordship's plan; but as he could not form a system, his Majesty had the prudence to desire those who had resigned their places to reassume them. Indeed it was an odd affair to see only two or three persons to fill all places and stations; it was the old blunder of the K—— and two fiddlers *solus*. I shall end my story with the beginning of Faulconbridge's soliloquy, in King John, "Mad world! mad kings! mad composition!" The Dutchess of Portland is just gone from me; she is very well now, but has had a great cold. The Dutchess of Leeds is dangerously ill, but not without hopes of recovery, though the newspapers say otherwise. The town is very sickly, and the disorder among the cattle does not abate. There are rumours that we have been beat in Scotland; but, I believe, they are owing to the fears of the weak or wishes of the wicked, for I cannot hear any grounds for them in fact.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.



*To the Dutchess of Portland.**Tunbridge Wells, the 27th, 1745.***DEAR MADAM,**

I WAS very agreeably surprized with your Grace's letter, and a visit from our friend, who is so variously dignified and distinguished. He will give you a good account of the hurly-burly he found me in amidst boxes, trunks, portmanteaus, and all travelling incumbrances. He will tell you also how his ears were entertained with nailing and cording of boxes, and all the fracas one could possibly make for a journey to Tunbridge, which we performed very well the next day. Your Grace has seen the place, so I shall not say any thing of it in general, but only as to the company here at present. We cannot complain of want of numbers, for all nations and sects contribute to make up our complement of people. Here are Hungarians, Italians, French, Portuguese, Irish, and Scotch. Then we have a great many Jews, with worse countenances than their friend Pontius Pilate, in a bad tapestry hanging. In opposition to these unbelievers, we have the very believing Roman Catholics; and to contrast with these ceremonious religionists, we have the quaint puritans, and rigid presbyterians. I never saw a worse collection of human creatures in all my life. My comfort is, that as there are not many of them I ever saw before, I flatter myself there are few of them I shall ever see again. I have great joy in Dr. Young, whom I disturbed in a reverie; at first he started, then bowed, then fell back into a surprize, then began a speech, relapsed into his astonish-

ment two or three times, forgot what he had been saying, began a new subject, and so went on. I told him your Grace desired he would write longer letters; to which he cried Ha! most emphatically, and I leave you to interpret what it meant. He has made a friendship with one person here, whom, I believe, you would not imagine to have been made for his bosom friend. You would, perhaps, suppose it was a bishop, a dean, a prebend, a pious preacher, a clergyman of exemplary life; or if a layman, of most virtuous conversation, one that had paraphrased St. Matthew, or wrote comments on Saint Paul; one blind with studying the Hebrew text, and more versed in the Jewish Chronicle than the English history; a man that knew more of the Levitical law, than of the civil, or common law of England. You would not guess that this associate of the Doctor's was—old *Cibber*! Certainly in their religious, moral, and civil character, there is no relation, but in their dramatic capacity there is some. But why the reverend divine, and serious author of the melancholy Night Thoughts, should desire to appear as a persona dramatis here I cannot imagine. The waters have raised his spirits to a fine pitch, as your Grace will imagine when I tell you how sublime an answer he made to a very vulgar question; I asked him how long he staid at the Wells? he said, as long as my rival staid. I was astonished how one who made no pretensions to any thing could have a rival, so I asked him for an explanation; he said, he would stay as long as the sun did. He did

an admirable thing to Lady Sunderland;\* on her mentioning Sir Robert Sutton, he asked her where Sir Robert's Lady was ; on which we all laughed very heartily, and I brought him off, half ashamed, to my lodgings ; where, during breakfast, he assured me he asked after Lady Sunderland, because he had a great honour for her ; and that having a respect for her sister, he designed to have enquired after her, if we had not put it out of his head by laughing at him. You must know, Mrs. Tichborne sat next to Lady Sunderland ; it would have been admirable to have had him finished his compliment in that manner. I am preparing for the ball. I am just come from riding, which is something for me to do, in a place where one groans under the pains and penalties of idleness. I beg my best respects to my Lord Duke ; my sister hopes you will accept of her's ; and I flatter myself, you sometimes remember

I am entirely your's,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Tunbridge-Wells, Sep. the 3d, 1745.*

MY DEAR LADY DUTCHESS,

I AM extremely happy in Dr. Young's company ; he has dined with me sometimes, and the other day rode out with me ; he carried me into places suited to the genius of his muse, sublime, grand, and with a pleasing gloom

\* Lady Sunderland was married to Sir Robert Sutton ; Mrs. Tichborne was her sister.

diffused over them ; there I tasted the pleasure of his conversation in its full force : his expressions all bear the stamp of novelty, and his thoughts of sterling sense. I think he is in perfect good health ; he practises a kind of philosophical abstinence, but seems not obliged to any rules of physic. All the ladies court him ; more because they hear he is a genius, than that they know him to be such. I tell him I am jealous of some ladies that follow him ; he says, he trusts my pride will preserve me from jealousy. The Doctor is a true philosopher, and sees how one vice corrects another till an animal, made up of ten thousand bad qualities, by " th' eternal art educing good from ill," grows to be a social creature, tolerable to live with. Your Grace orders me to give an account of spirits, appetite, and all the articles of my constitution. As to the first, they are good enough to laugh at very little jest, to be pleased with indifferent entertainment, and not to be unhappy in dull company ; as to the second, I can eat more buttered roll in a morning than a great girl at a boarding-school, and more beef at dinner than a yeoman of the guards ; I sleep well, and am indeed in perfect health, and the waters have done me much service. I had, just now, a letter from Mr. Montagu, in which he tells me he leaves his brother, to whom he made a visit in his way to the north, on this day, and proceeds towards Newcastle ; he tells me he met Dr. Courayer at Dunstable, travelling with Mr. Stanhope ; he has all the virtues, and almost as much innocence, as would qualify a man for Paradise, and to walk with angels, like our first parents. The little Doctor loves London better than the country. He has

not only virtue enough to keep himself from the contagion of vice, but to venture to be the physician, too, of the infected, and the friend of the infirm. It is a hard case that your Grace forgets your correspondents for your Bantam fowl. Though I have not my head so well curled as your Friesland hen, nor hold up my head like your upright duck, do you think I consent to be laid aside for them? Of all fowl I love the geese best, who supplies us with her quill; surely a goose is a goodly bird; if its hiss be insignificant, remember that from its side the engine is taken with which the laws are registered, and history recorded; though not a bird famous for courage, from this same ample wing are the heroes' exploits engraven on the pillar of everlasting Fame; though not an animal of sagacity, yet does it lend its assistance to the precepts of philosophy; if not beautiful, yet with its tender touch in the hands of some inspired lover is Lesbia's blush, Saccarissa's majesty, and Chloe's bloom, made lasting; and locks, which, "curled or uncurled, have turned to grey," by it continue in eternal beauty; and will you forsake this creature for a little pert fowl with a gaudy feather? That merit is little regarded now-a-days, I knew before, but little expected to find your Grace in that disposition. If I don't hear, in a post or two, that you have got an university of goslings, I shall really take it to heart. For my part, I look on them as the worthies of the age, they are impartial historians, unprejudiced philosophers, the great promoters of learning, and assistants of the belles lettres; and, if they fall into good hands, produce things that are admirable. You will say, perhaps, that while I praise them I give

you an instance of the impertinence of one of them; but know, Madam, what I write with is a chicken's feather, made into a pen by a stationer's apprentice; the first would never have been a goose, nor the second a man. From the figure of the pen, and its maker, I feared it would scrawl, and be flippant. Sure, when my stationer's youth comes to perfect monkey's estate, he will ape man's works better, else he will starve as a journeyman. I vow this writing engine is more like a tooth-pick than a pen; pray let it make some excuse for my bad writing; it is a pen fit for making apologies, for it is sure to commit a fault the first syllable it attempts.

I am your Grace's, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Tunbridge, 1745.*

DEAR MADAM,

I HOPE your Grace is sensible I should write oftener if it was consistent with drinking these waters; but really it is very inconvenient to apply a head to any business that cannot think without aching; I am not singular in this, for many people affirm thinking to be a pain at all times; I have more discretion than to declare as much any where but at Tunbridge. I have been in the vapours these two days, on account of Dr. Young's leaving us; he was so good as to let me have his company very often, and we used to ride, walk, and take sweet counsel together; a few days before he

went away he carried Mrs. Rolt (of Hertfordshire) and myself, to Tunbridge, five miles from hence, where we were to see some fine old ruins; but the manner of the journey was admirable, nor did I, at the end of it, admire the object we went to observe more than the means by which we saw it; and to give your Grace a description of the place, without an account of our journey to it, would be contradicting all form and order, and setting myself up as a critic upon all writers of travels. Much

Might be said of our passing worth,  
And manner how we sallied forth;

but I shall, as briefly as possible, describe our progress, without dwelling on particular circumstances; and shall divest myself of all pomp of language, and proceed in as humble a style as my great subject will admit.—First rode the Doctor on a tall steed, decently caparisoned in dark grey; next ambled Mrs. Rolt, on a hackney horse, lean as the famed Rozinante, but in shape much resembling Sancho's ass; then followed your humble servant on a milk-white palfrey, whose reverence for the human kind induced him to be governed by a creature not half as strong, and, I fear, scarce twice as wise as himself. By this enthusiasm of his, rather than my own skill, I rode on in safety, and at leisure, to observe the company; especially the two figures that brought up the rear. The first was my servant, valiantly armed with two uncharged pistols; whose holsters were covered with two civil harmless monsters that signified the valour and courtesy of our ancestors. The last was the Doctor's man, whose uncombed hair

so resembled the mane of the horse he rode, one could not help imagining they were of kin, and wishing, that for the honour of the family they had had one comb betwixt them; on his head was a velvet cap, much resembling a black saucepan, and on his side hung a little basket. Thus did we ride, or rather jog on, to Tunbridge town, which is five miles from the Wells. To tell you how the dogs barked at us, the children squalled, and the men and women stared, would take up too much time; let it suffice, that not even a tame magpie or caged starling, let us pass unnoted. At last we arrived at the King's-head, where the loyalty of the Doctor induced him to alight, and then, knight-errant-like, he took his damsels from off their palfreys, and courteously handed us into the inn. We took this progress to see the ruins of an old castle; but first our divine would visit the church-yard, where we read that folks were born and died, the natural, moral, and physical history of mankind. In the church-yard grazed the parson's steed, whose back was worn bare with carrying a pillion-seat for the comely, fat personage, this ecclesiastic's wife; and though the creature eat daily part of the parish, he was most miserably lean. Tired of the dead and living bones, Mrs. Rolt and I jumped over a stile, into the parson's field, and from thence, allured by the sight of golden pippins, we made an attempt to break into the holy man's orchard. He came most courteously to us, and invited us to his apple trees; to shew our moderation, we each of us gathered two mellow codlings, one of which I put into my pocket, from whence it sent forth a smell that I uncharitably supposed to proceed from the Doctor's



servant, as he waited behind me at dinner. The good parson offered to shew us the inside of his church, but made some apology for his undress, which was a true canonical dishabille. He had on a grey striped calamanco night-gown, a wig that once was white, but, by the influence of an uncertain climate, turned to a pale orange, a brown hat, encompassed by a black hatband, a band, somewhat dirty, that decently retired under the shadow of his chin, a pair of grey stockings, well mended with blue worsted, strong symptom of the conjugal care and affection of his wife, who had mended his hose with the very worsted she bought for her own; what an instance of exalted friendship, and how uncommon in a degenerate age

How rare meet now such pairs in love and honour join'd!

When we had seen the church, the parson invited us to take some refreshment at his house, but Dr. Young thought we had before enough trespassed on the good man's time, so desired to be excused, else we should, no doubt, have been welcomed to the house by Madam, in her muslin pinnners, and sarsenet hood; who would have given us some mead, and a piece of a cake, that she had made in the Whitsun holidays to treat her cousins. However, Dr. Young, who would not be outdone in good offices, invited the divine to our inn, where we went to dinner; but he excused himself, and came after the meal was over, in hopes of smoking a pipe; but our Doctor hinted to him that it would not be proper to offer any incense, but sweet praise, to such goddesses as Mrs. Rolt and your humble servant. To say the truth, I saw a large horn tobacco box, with

Queen Ann's head upon it, peeping out of his pocket, but I did not care to take the hint, and desire him to put in use that magnificent piece of furniture. After dinner we walked to the old castle, which was built by Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, in William Rufus's days. It has been a most magnificent building; the situation is extremely beautiful; the castle made a kind of half moon down to the river; and where the river does not defend it, it has been guarded by a large moat. It is now in the hands of a country squire, who is no common sort of man; but having said so much of the parson, I will let the rest of the parish depart in peace, though I cannot help feeling the utmost resentment at him for cutting down some fine trees, almost cotemporary with the castle, which he did to make room for a plantation of sour grapes. The towers at the great gate are covered with fine venerable ivy

It was late in the evening before we got home, but the silver Cynthia held up her lamp in the heavens, and cast such a light on the earth as shewed its beauties in a soft and gentle light. The night silenced all but our divine Doctor, who sometimes uttered things fit to be spoken in a season when all nature seems to be hushed and hearkening. I followed, gathering wisdom as I went, till I found, by my horse's stumbling, that I was in a bad road, and that the blind was leading the blind; so I placed my servant between the Doctor and myself, which he not perceiving, went on in a most philosophical strain to the great amazement of my poor clown of a servant, who not being wrought up to any pitch of enthusiasm, nor making any answer to all the fine things he heard, the Doctor wondering I was

domb, and grieving I was so stupid, looked round, declared his surprize, and desired the man to trot on before; and thus did we return to Tunbridge Wells. I can give your Grace great comfort in telling you Dr. Young will be with you in a week's time. The Dutchess of Manchester is very high in my esteem; she has most generous qualities, delicate sentiments, and an expression that does honour to them.

I am, Madam,  
your Grace's most affectionate,  
and obedient,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Mount Morris, Oct. 1745.*

DEAR MADAM,

I AM afraid my friend condemns me as a negligent correspondent, and, indeed, I own the charge too true. It was some years before I found out that writing letters was but a better kind of idleness, and a civil sort of impertinence; but the longer we live in the world the wider the social engagements spread; and the more business we enter into, the more we learn to esteem our own leisure, and respect that of others. I have been, of late, a very remiss correspondent, but not the more careless or forgetful friend; my health has of late required so much care, and such continual exercise, that my hours have been too much dedicated that way; indeed, by doing my utmost not to die, I have hardly lived. Tunbridge waters seem to have made me as

well as ever I was in my life, and I had entirely recovered my spirits, till these unhappy disturbances in the north alarmed me. Mr. Montagu was at the meeting at York, where every one largely contributed to the raising and arming the people; and I hope the precautions taken will put an end to this very threatening and approaching destruction. I find the Yorkshire gentlemen think it better to stay in the country, than to abandon it at this time of peril; and, though it gives me uneasiness and anxiety, I cannot wish those I love to act otherwise than consistently with those principles of honour that have always directed their actions. I left Tunbridge Wells last Friday sen'night; the waters were so beneficial to me I was loath to quit them; but the weather growing cold, it was time to leave a place that is never tolerable but in sunshine. The first stage we made was luckily so near Lord Westmorland's, that we had an opportunity of seeing his fine house. It is built in the Italian manner, and the figure so unlike our houses here, you would take it for a fine public building. The rooms within are finished in the highest taste that is possible, and furnished with all imaginable elegance; the apartments are magnificent, and there is something so grand, and at the same time so cheerful, in the house, that it seems to reconcile what are thought seldom to dwell under the same roof, greatness and tranquillity. It is pity the hostile powers of civil rage should ever violate this elegant retreat; but at such times all are enveloped in the common ruin, and no greatness, elegance, strength, or ornament, are left to any one but what resides in their own mind, from whence no human force can drive it.

How much is it, therefore, worthy every one's care most to cultivate what they are surest to continue to possess. I rejoice that the worthy possessor of Mere-worth has a good retreat in his own virtue, in case of any public or private misfortune. But how different is it with many of our professors of taste, who adorn their houses, improve and cultivate their gardens, and every thing about them, and leave nothing waste and rude but their minds, nothing harsh and unpolished but their tempers; raise temples of honour to virtues and powers every where but in their own hearts, where there is no trace of respect and regard for any thing noble and worthy. If you had come to Tunbridge I should have had great pleasure in your company; we had a very agreeable little party; and, as prudent people should do through life, troubled ourselves no farther about the crowd than not to give them any reasonable cause of offence.

I am your Grace's, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU

---

*To the Same.*

*Mount Morris, Oct. 23, 1745.*

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE every day, since I came here, had the pen in my hand to write to your Grace, and as constantly have been prevented. I find, by your letter, you imagined me, before this time, in the great city, but behold me still at a quiet fireside in the country. Mr. Montagu's being of the association in Yorkshire detained him there, and it was but the beginning of this week he proposed

to be in town ; and some affairs he had to transact not being finished so soon as he expected, he will not arrive in town till to-night. Your Grace will say I am a most undutiful wife not to attend him there, but my mother is so loath to part with me that I have, instead of my personal appearance, wrote a very earnest invitation to him to come hither, if there is not any business in Parliament that requires his attendance. If he cannot come hither I shall set out the day after I have his letter that tells me so. I own I was very uneasy at his being in the north, in such a bad neighbourhood as that of the rebels, but he thought it not right to leave the country while in confusion, as the country gentlemen were then useful in contributing their money and care to defend it. He says they are now very easy, and out of all danger, as our regular forces are assembled, and I hope all will again be settled in tranquillity and peace. I heartily wish Mr. Montagu may come hither, for my mother is not, I fear, quite in good health ; but this I would not have mentioned, lest she should hear I thought she had any appearance of the same complaint as last year ; she seems herself to suspect a little, but has the greatest submission that can be to all-disposing Providence. I hope she may live many years, but I think it necessary she should pass her time cheerfully, as that is thought particularly advisable in her case. My sister stays with my mother till after Christmas, and then they all come to town, where they will stay four months this year, of which I am glad, as the best advice may be had. I have brought a notable constitution from Tunbridge, and very good spirits ; I think myself as well as I could wish to be, as to

health. Tunbridge is very good for bodily infirmities ; as to the weakness and faults of the mind, I cannot recommend it. One leads but an idle and irrational life ; however, it is not a very disagreeable one. There is variety of company, and consequently some agreeable people ; as for the others, if one has but good humour enough not to displease, or be displeased with them, it is sufficient. All pages of human life are worth reading. The wise instruct, the gay divert us, the absurd cure the spleen, the imprudent shew us what to shun, the vapoured teach us that reasonable employments, and sufficient exercise, are necessary to keep the frame of mind and body in order ; and, in short, it cannot be unprofitable to converse with human creatures, of whom even the imprudencies teach us experience, and whose thoughtlessness gives occasion to reflection. It is true the study of human kind is not so pleasant as that of other animals, where all seem apparently to act for the end they were made. A slumbering minister seems not to fulfil his round of life as well as the restlessly industrious wheel animal we saw in Mr. Baker's microscope, an improvident family may not be compared to the prudent ants, a nation at variance in itself is not so happily amicable as the community of bell animals who so worthily require a microscopical attention ; but however individuals may seem to thwart the end of their being, in general all contribute to the universal good. If we saw only the wheel part of the animal, how should we laugh at a creature made but to turn ? and ask, to what purpose so much motion ? But it is a subject of which we can discover the whole, and we see a heart whose blood is fed from the little milk,

and limbs nourished by it. And thus it is with the whole body of human-kind ; classes of people make up the members ; some are the wheels, and some the claws ; we rail at these as restless, at those as rapacious, and so on. Could we see the entire economy we should then declare how all conspire to the great end, and learn not to despise any part of so excellent a constitution. It is not possible Almighty wisdom can make any thing that does not tend to a wise end, and it is a good way to reconcile oneself to those we think fools, to look upon them as some way to be a part of wisdom, though unhappily the connection be invisible to us. So instead of a microscope, that considers only minute objects, take a moral and physical telescope, look over the whole creation of intelligent beings, and you will be reconciled to every part of them. Your Grace frequently complains of the conversation of a certain person who is not wise ; I own the conversation of a simpleton is a grievance, but there the disparity of a wise man and a fool often ends. When passions have their sway (too often strongest in the brightest minds), Dame Reason's fundamental laws are as much broken by the one as the other : there is nothing stable in human nature. Folly sometimes has a fit of prudence, Wisdom often a fit of folly ; but I own there is great difference in the conversation of the different sorts of persons ; and though it may sound imprudently, I think a fool is almost better to be trusted as an agent for our business in the world, than to be endured as a companion in our solitude, for we see unwise people grow very rich, even at the expence of the ingenious. But if I have weakly defended these



unhappy dull people, pray let me enjoy that charity I would procure for them. I am, with the most affectionate wishes, and sincere and grateful regard, your

Grace's most obedient,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

Nov. 19th, 1745.

MADAM,

I AM at a loss what to say in excuse for myself, and fear your Grace has condemned me as very idle. While my mother was with me, I was unwilling to leave her alone, even for a moment; and since she left me I have been in a continual hurry of visits. The learned faculty have given us better hopes of my mother's case than I could have expected; they say it is not yet cancerous, and that it may be many years before it hurts her. Your Grace was excessively good in sending me the receipts, which I have sent her, and also the walnut medicine. I wish I had any agreeable news to send your Grace, but really we hear none that can rejoice us. Carlisle is surrendered to the rebels, who, I hear, behave civilly, and not as conquerors. Their success, no doubt, has raised their spirits. A party of Marshal Wade's took their quarter-master prisoner; who behaved with great spirit, said they might hang him as soon as they pleased; the Marshal asked him if the Pretender designed to fight them; to which he answered, yes, and to beat them too. Ligonier is still ill; the Dukes of Richmond and Bed-

ford are set out. Lord Sandwich is aide-de-camp to the Duke of Richmond. I pity poor Lady Sandwich, she endeavours to bear up, but certainly she is in an uneasy situation; I saw her on Sunday, and she is to dine here to-morrow. Her ladyship enquired after your Grace. I suppose you know Sir Francis Dashwood is upon the brink of matrimony. I see him sometimes with his intended bride, Lady Ellis; he is really very good company. She is ill at present, but, I imagine, as soon as the writings are finished, and she recovers her health, they will be joined in wedlock's holy bands. Lord Rockingham has been extremely ill, but, it is hoped, he is something better this afternoon. He has gone through all the severities of physic. There is a new poem come out called Harmony; I would have sent it your Grace, but that I do not think it would entertain you; the poet seems to have the machinery of poetry but not the spirit of it; he forgets no poetic fable, but intermixes them with his philosophy, so that he contrives to make his system obscure, and his work very tedious. I think this is not a season for the Muses; those delicate ladies will not visit us in such turbulent times; Bellona's trumpet will drown the gentle lute and harmonious harp; the men are all become military, and the ladies politicians. I do not like such times; I wish we had our peace, our whisk, and our vanities, as last year; that by the word Drum we understood a polite assembly, and by a Rout only an engagement of hoop-petticoats. I have not heard of any assemblies since I came to town; and indeed, I think, people frighten each other so much when they meet, that there is little pleasure arising

from society. The murrain amongst the cows is another misfortune; it grows very general about London. I should think your young angels, when they take food after the manner of mortals, should rather prefer water-gruel to milk-porridge; for one does not know how soon this disease may spread into the country, and the milk is reckoned to be poison. I find the Dutchess of Manchester is in town. Have you heard any thing lately of what was talked of at Tunbridge?

I am, your Grace's, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.*

*Dever-street, Nov. 26th, 1745.*

SIR,

I HAVE so long omitted to write to you, that I am now almost ashamed to do it; but as I know my cousin and you to have angelic dispositions, I think you will receive the sinner that repenteth. There has been such a chasm in our correspondence that I don't know where to begin to enquire after you, or to give you an account of myself; though, by my sister, I believe, we have had pretty good information of each other; and that you know I have recovered my health and spirits at Tunbridge, as I have had the pleasure of hearing of Mrs. Freind's and your welfare at Bath. These first concerns being settled, let me ask what you think of the situation of public affairs? Alas! what a scene of confusion, and how melancholy a change, since I had your last letter, when peace spread its olive branches

over the land! If we took any part in foreign wars it was voluntary, and we could retreat when we pleased; the desolation occasioned by war was in countries strangers to our knowledge, and almost to our pity; but now we are not contending for visionary greatness and chimerical honour, but for our religion, laws, liberties, the enjoyment of our property, and the shelter of our habitations. Our adversaries were lately our fellow-subjects, and brethren of our community, to whom we have given, and from whom received the aids of society, and benefits of mutual intercourse, and have lived with them in all the social civilities of life. If their blood be shed it must fall on that very earth from whence they might have claimed support, and though they may deserve no pity, they can plead for it in the language of our country. I hope we are secure of victory and a speedy conquest over these cruel invaders of their country's peace; by the most authentic accounts of their forces, I think we have not much to fear from them; but it is strange that this great and powerful kingdom should be shaken by the attack of a few straggling banditti. Lord Lonsdale writes to the ministry that their numbers are but 3500. They are well disciplined and regular, I believe, for temperance and patience are the virtues of poverty, and few of them have known plenty and the wantonness of heart, and dissoluteness of manners it is apt to inspire. The winter marches have, I fear, hurt our troops, but they are said to bear them with cheerfulness on this important and pressing occasion. Mr. Wade is said to be at Burroughbridge, and the Pretender at Manchester. Lord Lonsdale has burnt a great stock of hay and corn-ricks

about his house, that they might not nourish rebellion, a very handsome sacrifice to his country, and the more so, as people of the greatest rank here have been endeavouring to make the utmost advantage of the unhappy state of their country, and have sold the assistance it was their duty to give. Self-interest has taken such firm possession of every breast, that not any threatening calamity can banish it in the smallest instance : there is no view of the affair more melancholy than this. It is terrible to see people afraid to trust each other on this occasion ; every thing is turned to a job, and money given for the general good, is converted too much to private uses. There was yesterday great rejoicing among the mob upon a popular rumour of the Pretender's brother, Edward, being taken in the transport-ship, but that is unhappily not true, but a ship coming to the Pretender with succours from France is taken ; they had sent him over several officers, and Charles Ratcliffe, brother to the late Lord Derwentwater, is with them ; so he will have the honour to die for the same cause for which his brother suffered. It is strange the first example did not cure this family infirmity ; it is the worst kind of King's evil. The Duke of Cumberland set out yesterday, as did the Duke of Bedford and Lord Sandwich ; the Duke of Montagu gave his lordship one of his regiments. Almost all our nobility are gone to the army, so that many of the great families are in tears ; and indeed it makes the town appear melancholy and dismal. Let it be said, for the honour of our sex, there are no drums, no operas ; and plays are unfrequented ; and there is not a woman in England, except Lady Brown, that has a song or tune

in her head; but indeed her ladyship is very unhappy at the suspension of operas. Your acquaintance, Mrs. Hammond, I hear, is in high spirits. Lord Suffolk's son, Mr. Thomas Howard, is recovering from the small-pox. My poor sister is to stay in the country till after Christmas; is not that grievous?

I am, dear Sir,  
your most sincere friend, and  
affectionate cousin,

E. MONTAGU.

*To Mrs. Freind.*

1746.

DEAR MADAM,

THE tender hand of a friend does all in the power of human art to heal the wounds given by affliction. That you love me, and interest yourself for me, must, on all occasions, give me comfort. It is not consistent with duty or prudence to be ever considering one's loss with those circumstances of tenderness that make one unable to bear up against it, so I will say as little as possible of the dear and tender parent, and endeavour to recollect her only as a most excellent woman, and try to become good by her example. She concluded with an heroic constancy the most virtuous life; from her prosperity she drew arguments of resignation and patience, and expressed the greatest thankfulness that Providence had lent her so many blessings without repining that they were to be taken away. How few are they that do not grow proud and stubborn by that

indulgence which made her humble and resigned ! She had spent her life in doing those just and right things that bring peace at the last ; and after living so many years in the world, left it with the greatest innocence of soul and integrity of heart I ever knew. How much superior is this to the forced and unmeritorious innocence of a sequestered cloister ; for after having bent to all the duties of human life, she had not contracted any of the vices or bad affections of it ; nor had she the least tincture of the secret faults of malice or envy which often lurk about the hearts of those who are esteemed persons of unblameable conduct. Through every action of her life she deserved to be loved and esteemed, and in her death to be almost adored ; for in that scene she appeared almost more than human. But this subject is too affecting, nor can I as yet think of my final separation from such a friend with the resignation I ought.

I beg you would think favourably of a journey to Sandleford ; you cannot imagine the pleasure it would give me to see you there. We are still roasting in this dusty town, but hope a very few days will carry us into the country.

I am dear Mrs. Friend's  
most affectionate cousin,  
and sincere friend,

ELIZ. MONTAGU.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

1747.

My dearest Lady Dutchess's letter did not arrive till long after I had wished to hear from her ; however, as I had accounts of your Grace's and your family's welfare from my other correspondents, I did not feel the anxiety I should otherwise have suffered. My long indisposition hindered my writing to any one, so that I am now an insolvent debtor, and though I write every day till I am so tired I can hardly hold up my head, I am still on the wrong side of the balance. Pray has your Grace read the most melancholy of poems, Mr. Lyttelton's Verses on his Wife ? I think they are extremely pretty ; they describe a most delicate and tender affection. I must recommend to you Mr. Melmoth's translation of Pliny's letters ; I think they will please your Grace ; you will find sentiments of friendship and generosity that will touch a heart like yours : they are not in the epistolary style of modern letters, nor abound with turns of wit like French writers ; but noble and elevated sentiments, and dignity of expression, will make up for the absence of little ornaments and embellishments. Your Grace will see how a great man was employed in the service of his country, and how engaged in domestic duties ; his desire to acquire fame was not greater than his endeavour to deserve it ; he gained the favour of his prince without flattery, and used that favour to the advantage of his friends, and did not turn it to the uses of pride, avarice, or luxury. I had before read a French translation of



these letters, but, I think, Mr. Melmoth's preferable to it: and I was pleased to see the noble Roman in a good English habit. The generality of our English translators work merely for bread, and bring a great writer down to their homely rank; Mr. Melmoth is a gentleman; he was bred to the law, but was too much an admirer of the Muses and polite letters, and left an honourable and gainful profession to retire into the country. But, I suppose, that the world might not think it was done merely through a principle of idleness, he has given them a proof that he has been conversing with the fine geniuses of antiquity. I own it surprizes me to see him dedicate his work to a man who is the very opposite of Pliny, and I was sorry to see names put together whose characters so ill agree. There is a gentleman of the law to whom these letters might properly have been dedicated.\*

I am, Madam,  
your Grace's most obedient, and most  
faithful humble servant,

E. M. .

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.*

1747.

MY MOST EXCELLENT, BUT MOST SILENT COUSIN,

It is the hard hap of many an honest person to be forced to talk of themselves to avoid being forgotten; and, I find, it begins to grow necessary for me to tell you, you have a friend and cousin, Eliza, who lives in

\* The Editor believes the person here alluded to, to be the Honourable Charles Yorke

Dover-street. I have indeed had the pleasure of hearing from others that you are well, otherwise I should not have so long delayed making an humble petition for a line to inform me of your health. I hoped long before this time to have been in the country, but Scotch bills, and I know not what, have so delayed us, that the charming youth of the year will be over before I get there. I have been often at Ranelagh and Vauxhall, but I cannot think these favourite summer diversions make up for the neighbourhood of the noisy and dusty Piccadilly. Though I hear people talking from morning to night, I do not remember that they have said any thing worth repeating; and for news I hear not any. The press indeed has produced something of late; Mr. Lyttelton's book receives universal applause. I do not doubt but you have read it before this time, otherwise I would send it to you. Mr. Warburton's Notes on Shakespear are most extraordinary; he seems to proceed by new rules of criticism, and make Shakespear speak as he prompts him, though ever so wide from his words or seeming meaning; the word *means* he changes for *medicines*, though there is such a difference in the orthography there could hardly be a mistake in the printing; but indeed, according to the vulgar phrase, he too often makes poor Shakespear talk like an apothecary. I have been amusing myself this morning with looking over this noble piece of criticism, and, among many flowers, I have gathered a nosegay, some of which I will send you, as I suppose you have been too wise to buy the book. In Romeo and Juliet, speaking of the friar, Shakespear makes somebody praise his

piety, benevolence, &c. and says, this friar the city is much obliged to him ; a common, though not elegant manner of speaking, and more common in the province where Shakespear lived the first part of his life ; but Mr. Warburton most sagaciously turns it thus : " This friar the city is much obliged to *hymn*. And to hymn is to *laud*, and to laud is to *praise* ;" and so, by incredible pains, and a new verb, he makes you understand the city should praise the friar. In the Merchant of Venice, when a lady gives her friend joy on her marriage, and wishes her happiness, the lady answers again, " I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased to wish it back on you." Mr. Warburton says, it should be, " I am well *prised* to wish it back on you, from the French *appris*, which means instructed, and that the kind wish teaches her how to be civil," &c. In the same play, old Shakespear says, " Look how the floor of heaven is thick enlay'd with patterns of bright gold ;" modern Mr. Warburton, " patens of bright gold ;" patens means a border in heraldry, and the lid of a sacramental cup.

I am sorry so many industrious critics have not been able to make sense of one line they have so belaboured as that unhappy one in the song, " Blow, blow, thou winter's wind," which in Shakespear runs thus :

Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude ;  
Thy tooth is not so keen  
" Because thou art not seen,"  
Altho' thy breath be rude.

The formal critic, Sir Thomas Hammer, says it should be thus,

Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Thou ~~canst~~ not that teen.

Mr. Warburton says,

Thy tooth is not so keen,

and why?

*Because thou art not sheen.*

Now *sheen* means *bright*, but the commentator renders it *smiling*; and the winter's wind being, no doubt, you know, black, it was not sheen, so not flattering, and therefore, certainly preferable to this sheen enemy, and therefore not so bad as man's ingratitude. In the fine speech of the seven ages of man's life in *As You Like it*, Mr. W. makes Shakespear (in a note too long to give you) allude to the Italian entertainment of a pantalone, which, I believe, the author never thought of, when he gave the old man the slippers that fit him so well. One short note more I must give you from *Love's Labour Lost*; Armado to his page Moth, says, as he goes out, "Moth, follow?" Moth replies, "like the sequel?" this small jest used to content the gentle reader, but Mr. Warburton says, it should be "like the *se-quel*," which in French means a great man's train; and the jest," says he, "is, that a single page was all his train." What a jest, and what a commentator! I have, like a prudent person, filled my letter with another person's nonsense, and spared my own; but if you write not speedily, expect a very peevish scolding

letter, the dictates of my angry mind. Can you not write without a text? and must we have none of your thoughts unless we will live at Witney and make blankets? Pray make my compliments to all your family, particularly to Mrs. Freind and my cousin Robinson, who is with you, I presume, by this time. My sister, and Mr. M. desire their respects.

I am, dear Sir,  
your most affectionate cousin, and  
sincere friend,

E. MONTAGU.

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*Sandleford, the 12th of September.*

DEAR MADAM,

IF you are as glad to hear from me as I am ready to write to you, you will not think me troublesome for addressing to you two posts together; but my last was so short I do not consider it as a letter: this perhaps, may not have the fault of brevity, for if I have time I am sure to have inclination to write to dear Mrs. Donnellan, in whose remembrance and affection I would contend for some share. I told you, in my last, I would give an account of our tour, so I must make you set out on the progress with me, and shall therefore insist on carrying you, in the first place, to Winchester, where we arrived on a Saturday evening. I know you will willingly accompany me to the cathedral on Sunday, and after that I desire you will give your

attention to the building, which is of the neatest of the Gothic kind, and rather grown reverend than old by time ; there is to the choir an extremely fine screen of more modern structure, but in a still more ancient order of architecture, namely the Corinthian. Having considered what time has done to the works of man, let us see how it deals with the men themselves ; the turbulent William Rufus lies here very quiet in a stone chest ; in another place, of all the pride and ambition of Cardinal Beaufort there remains only a mitred monument ; of the learned William of Wickham merely a brazen figure. The bones of Saxon kings, who fought bloody battles with each other for a less compass of land than a modern gamester will lose at a rubber at whist, lie quietly interred by each other, and their bones are contained in a chest not big enough to hold a fine lady's muffs and tippets. What an excellent arithmetician is death ! He subtracts and divides till he sets all accounts even, and makes the sum total of the king and cobbler equal. But enough of the dead, and let us pass on to those who are still under the delusions of life ; in the evening we saw Mr. Dummer's ; for the pleasure we received there I thank you, as you informed me it was worth our attention ; from thence we reached Southampton, of which I need not say any thing, as you know it better than I do ; but pray let me ask if you ever went up the round tower, which, I think, commands the finest prospect I ever saw ? We staid at Southampton till the tide was full, and then went to Lady Peterborough's, with which I was much charmed. Lord Peterborough, in a letter to Mr. Pope, speaking of this place, says, " I confess the lofty Sacharissa at

Stowe, but am pleased with my own little Amoret ;<sup>v</sup> He had reason to say so ; Stowe, like a court beauty, is richly adorned, and set off with great cost and contrivance ; nature is at all the expense for his Amoret, and has lavished on her charms that art can poorly imitate. From Mount Bevis we went to Lindhurst, to make a visit to Mrs. Meadows ; the forest was new to me, and I was struck with a kind of awe at it ; we are apt to respect even inanimate things to which time seems to have shewn a reverence. I could not help thinking the aged oak must look on generations of mortals as we do on people at a masquerade, who assume and lay by their character before they have time to learn their part. We spent one day entirely in the forest, on another we went to Hurst castle, which stands on a narrow beach that reaches to the sea, and is opposite to the Isle of Wight, where we could distinctly discover trees and buildings ; another day we went to Beaulieu, a seat of the Duke of Montagu's ; it was an ancient monastery, had great lands annexed to it, and seems to have been a considerable building. If the ivy could have spoken it would have told us many an old story ; as it is, it is a venerable and silent witness of the antiquity of the place, which, by its situation amidst fine wood and water, is very beautiful. We went from Lindhurst to Salisbury, but were so late as to miss seeing Lord Folkstone's. You are acquainted with Salisbury so I need not describe what I saw there ; but I cannot omit that we received great civilities from the Bishop, and Mrs. Sherlock, and were invited to dinner by them, which favours we were entitled to only on account of being friends of Dr. Courayer. Mrs. Sher-

lock carried me with her to church, and the Bishop of Lincoln gave us an incomparable sermon. We could not have the pleasure of dining with the Bishop on account of going early to Wilton, where indeed I was much charmed. Such a river for such a bridge, and such a bridge for such a river! was ever any thing so delightful! then the fine hill, the rich valley, the noble town of Salisbury, and the eminent steeple! Do not all these things deserve a note of admiration? I know you agree with me in admiring this place. If one can leave so fine a garden for any thing, it must be to see so fine a house. As to the statues and bustos they are certainly very fine, but I think too many; heroes should not have so many competitors, nor philosophers so much company; a respectable society may be increased into a mob; I should, if they were mine, sell half of their figures to purchase their works, which are indeed the images of wise men; Plato and Anacreon, Cicero and Pindar, differ but little in features, but much in sentiments and language. We went from Salisbury to Stone Henge, which is indeed an astonishing thing; and every way one would account for it there arises an insuperable difficulty. We then went to Amesbury, where great improvements have been and are still making; the winding river is pretty, but the place is marshy and wet, and I think promises neither an improvement of health nor cheerfulness. The front of the house looks very prettily on the outside; within there are but few rooms, only one good one, and that is regular, and is prettily furnished with Mr. Wootton's landscapes. From Amesbury we reached Marlborough early enough to walk in Lord Hertford's garden, with



which Dr. Courayer was pleased at seeing; a sort of acquaintance, but it has nothing in its aspect to recommend it to strangers; there is a mount in it of a surprising height, not raised to satisfy the curious eye merely with a prospect, but it has of old times been made as a military observatory, to watch the motions of an army. In our way from Marlborough hither we called at Lord Bruce's, which is situated in a kind of forest; the access to the house is very grand; you pass through an avenue of a mile and a half in length, with sometimes the opening of a fine lawn; the house makes little appearance on the outside, but it contains many fine rooms, richly gilt, well furnished, and adorned with many family pictures; but the place is rather great than agreeable. Are you not glad I am at the end of my journey? It is now time we should both take rest, but I must tell you that at Salisbury Dr. Courayer had the agreeable surprize of seeing Lord Feversham at the Bishop's; the Doctor was abashed, and his lordship shewed some little resentment; indeed, to go so near an old friend, and a new peer, and not make him a visit, was not so well. Lord Feversham said he and his lady would have been glad to have seen us at Downton. I hope that before this time my brother Robinson has had the pleasure of seeing you. Dr. Courayer sends his thanks for the ring, but I fear he will find your advice impracticable, though this morning he had the douceur to say he was sorry my head ached. I should find it more difficult to avoid what your motto directs than to obey it, so you may be sure of my fulfilling your commands in the amplest manner. Pray make my compliments to the family you are with; accept

those of all here, and particularly Mrs. Morgan's, who sits by me very patiently, and desires to be mentioned in the most respectful manner.

I am, dear Madam,  
your sincerely affectionate friend and  
humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Dutchess of Portland.*

*Sunday the 13th of November.*

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR Grace, who is always indulgent to your friends, will easily pardon the omissions of a sickly correspondent. I am infinitely obliged to your kind concern for my health, and, to shew you that I am not obstinate, I am really preparing to go to Bath this week, and with less reluctance, as I have lately been severely ill. I suppose Lord Titchfield is by this time returned to school; my brothers tell me extraordinary things of his genius and industry: they go next week to Cambridge, very happy, no doubt, to enter into the world, which, in distant prospect, appears well, and at their age they have little apprehension of the disappointments they may meet with. Hope, like other blossoms, puts forth fairest in the spring. I return your Grace thanks for your congratulations on my brother's success; he carried his election for Canterbury very triumphantly, but in speaking to the people (for the corporation is very large) he fatigued himself, and lost

his voice for some time, and is now drinking Bristol water. I agree with your Grace in finding King James's Life very dull; he was a most royal pedant; his speeches, and his proclamations, were dictated by the goddess of Dullness; and what provokes one the more, is the high conceit he entertained of his foolish head; he thought himself equal to Solomon and superior to Queen Elizabeth; most enormous errors! and such as none but the breath of flattery could have blown up in his mind. I think the English history, from his time, grows very disagreeable. In some reigns the kingdom is in the most terrible confusion, in others, it appears mean and corrupt; in King Charles the Second's time what a figure we make with French measures and French mistresses! But when our times are written, England will recover its glory; such conquests abroad, such prosperity at home, such prudence in council, such vigour in execution, so many men clothed in scarlet, so many fine tents, so many cannon that do not so much as roar, such easy taxes, such flourishing trade! can posterity believe it? I wish our history, from its incredibility, may not get bound with the fairy tales; and serve to astonish children, and make nursery maids moralize. One thing gives me great pleasure to reflect upon, as I cannot help being interested in the honour of the times we live in, and that is, that though some of our admirals, and many of our captains, have been suspected of heinous offences, yet they have all been acquitted, and proved innocent, when the matter was nearly enough inspected. Then our friendship to our dear dulcinea, the Queen of Hungary, is most heroical; and indeed our undeserved

fidelity to all our allies, is not a little to be admired. I always honoured the liberal character of Sir Timothy Treatall; it was good in a private person, but how great in a whole nation, and how fine would it appear on the theatre of the world; scene the first, act the first, enter England Treatall; what next? why again England Treatall! and so on; noble Treatall for ever! Such a play can never be hissed; Envy herself would never shake her locks at it. How will this noble disinterestedness outshine the narrow prudence, and unroyal frugality of Queen Elizabeth! She gathered the fruit of the olive, and forgot the noble leaf of the laurel; her low aim was to make her people rich and easy, by which she turned half the kingdom to low mechanics, and scarlet and fine linen were to be found nowhere but in her palaces; indeed, when she was at war she made something more than fireworks of it, but still she had the mean object of peace in her head, and had no taste for modern glory; and her attention to the useful and necessary was unprince-like. Adversity, and a private education, might have done something towards this, and it is all one can say to excuse her; and, to our singular felicity, her successors have not copied her in any of these political errors.

I was made very happy on Friday by hearing Lady Sandwich was arrived safe; it is mortifying to me that I must still lose the happiness of conversing with her; but I am rejoiced that she will lie-in in England, for I could not endure to think of her being in such circumstances at a distance from all her friends, and amongst a set of people whom I should not imagine the most agreeable or tender. I shall write again to your Grace

as soon as I am settled at the Bath. This weather promises us a bad journey, and I am afraid we shall find the roads in their worst condition. Mr. Montagu tells me he has heard charming things of Lord Titchfield, and which I think promise great future happiness to you. I may sincerely affirm I share your content; and that every year may improve Your happiness is the most earnest wish of

your Grace's much obliged, affectionate,  
and faithful,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*Friday, the 24th of December.*

DEAR DONNELLAN,

I WILL not add to my mortification in not hearing from you, that of not writing to you. I am now better able to write than I have been of late; I am seldom very sick, nor have I the enjoyment of perfect health. I had the Love Elegies sent me down last post; my heart aches for the gentle fair mentioned in them; pity, that lives in the tender delicate form, and gentle mind, cannot be absent from her breast. And there is so much love and happiness expressed as really must affect her. The men have always a great advantage over us, and particularly, as Mr. Hammond says, they "may own the graceful weakness of the heart." Love is to them an ornament, in our sex it is looked upon in a worse light; and grief, like other passions, spends itself in words; but sorrow, pent up in silence, keeps long its

mournful residence in the heart. It is a sign of the prepossession of one's own merit if that of another cannot make its impression, therefore I cannot see why a woman should be less respected for a sensibility to merit in one man who dedicates his attention to her. It is unhappy where people love each other much, and cannot marry; but while they do not marry any other person, I do not see any harm in it. The richest dowry is the gift of the heart, and no one ought to marry where they think they cannot bestow it. Love is the frailty of the fairest minds,

And though its hapless case is falsely told,  
By the rash-judging young, and the ill-natured old,

yet among the best people it finds indulgence. I want to know what you think of these Elegies; they please me much; but between you and me, they seem to me to have something of a foreign air; had the poet read Scotch ballads oftener, and Ovid and Tibullus less, in my opinion he had appeared a more natural writer, and a more tender lover. I assure you I admire the verses extremely, but if I had not known them to be originals I should have taken them for translations. You will laugh perhaps at my proposing Scotch ballads for an accomplished writer's improvement; but to me it seems there are no love-verses that seem suggested by the heart and softened in the language, like some Scotch songs. I cannot put Petrarch and all his stars, suns, and moons, in competition with them, when they do but attempt to describe their mistress, "like a lily in a bogie." Artless beauty, simple manners, and soft wishes sound sweetly through the shepherd's oaten.

reed, while he warbles sweet his wood notes wild; but to the artful lyre, or high-sounding trumpet, gentle sighs and artless words do not so well agree; the string is sounded higher than the tone of passion, and sincerity seems lost in words of too high sense and studied meaning. If you differ from me in opinion I fear I may not have your judgment by which to examine my own till we meet, for I desire you would not write when you are not well. I hope it will not be very long before I may come to town. I shall send Mrs. Percival some potted moor-game; I am mortified I cannot send her any more than a brace of birds, but they are so scarce I have not been able to get more at any one time, though I have endeavoured it these two months.

I am your's, dear friend, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

\* \* This letter should have been placed in 1743, as Hammond died in 1742, and the Elegies were published after his death.

---

*To the Same.*

Dec. 28, 1747.

DEAR MADAM,

I RECEIVED your kind letter just as I was in the hurry of my departure from Sandleford, so I thought it best to defer writing till I could give you an account of myself from Bath. As to my journey I performed pretty well; the first day indeed I was taken ill on the road, and obliged to repose myself for some time at an ale-house; which, as the delice of the greater part of our countrymen, you would imagine no very bad place.

My landlady was a very good woman, and, between comforts of mild and stale, grown to a comely size; she informed me her husband made malt, as well as brewed it; as soon as I grew better I desired to see the performance of that noble English manufacture, and was accordingly initiated into the mysteries of making malt. Content with my refreshment and instruction, I went forward with my journey, and performed it pretty well. The day after I came I consulted Dr. Hartley; he gave me comfortable words, said mine was a Bath case, would be cured by the waters, but medicines were improper and dangerous; and neither ordered bolus, draught, or electuary, or any of the warlike stores of the faculty. The waters do not disagree with me, nor have I been ill since I came, in any violent degree. My spirits are not in the best order, which you will not wonder at when I tell you my brother Tom has a milliary fever; Dr. Wilmot does not perceive any danger at present, but cannot pronounce him safe till the fever leaves him; but by this post my brother Morris says Dr. Wilmot thinks the fever is rather abated. You will expect I should give you some account of the place, but I would fain defer it till I am in better humour; at present it appears to me very disagreeable. Here are many whom I know, but few whom I like; the rooms are very full of noise and whisk; as to the balls I cannot give any account of them, as they did not continue in the Christmas week. I wish Lady Sunderland and Miss Sutton may come here. We have here Miss Chudleigh, and a very pretty daughter of Lord Chief Justice;\* but they are

\* Willes.



ill provided with beaus, so that it is scarce worth their while to be so handsome. When I have more spirits you shall hear further from me ; at present I am very stupid.

I am dear Mrs. Donnellan's  
very affectionate friend and servant,  
E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*January, 1748.*

I AM sure so good and tender a friend will suffer for me in my present heavy affliction ; and I cannot excuse myself if I do not remove your uneasiness, as much as I can, by telling you I bear it as well as can be expected. It is impossible not to feel under such a grievous circumstance ; but I am composed and quiet, more than you would imagine. My poor brother's virtues and capacity gave me the fairest hopes of seeing him enjoy life with great advantages ; a fatal moment has destroyed those hopes, but it must be length of time that can make me submit to the cruel disappointment ; he was an honour and happiness to us all, and I never thought of him without pleasure. Alas ! how it is changed ! But it is our duty to bear these things ; and I have of late had too much acquaintance with affliction, and with the loss of those I loved. As to this good young man, I hoped it would have rather been his business to have grieved for me, so uncertain is health and strength. I will say no more at present. Adieu. My sister is as well as can be hoped.

Mr. Montagu is most careful of us, and I cannot amidst my sorrow, help thanking Heaven for so kind a friend.

I am ever your's,

E. MONTAGU.

\* \* Mr. Thomas Robinson, her second brother, died of the effects of a cold caught by being overheated in pleading before the House of Commons. He was a young man so promising in his profession that Lee, then Chief Justice of the King's Bench, exclaimed, "We have lost the man in England for a point of law!" His treatise on Gavelkind still continues to be the standard book on that subject. In sprightliness of wit, and fertility of invention, he much resembled his sister; his memory was stored with classical literature, his taste and judgment were so refined, and so accurate, as to have left on Mrs. Montagu's recollection an indelible impression of admiration, and a regret which no subsequent acquisition in friendship could sufficiently compensate.

---

*To the Same.*

*Bath, March, 14th, 1748.*

DEAR MADAM,

I AM sorry to find you have not yet recovered your spirits; but we, of nervous constitutions, are like ships that carry too much sail, we are driven too fast and too far by every gale; and cannot so easily tack about, and fall in with every incident, as those whose spirits are not so violently borne away; which are of the happiest disposition, will bear many an ingenious argument, but never any absolute decision; but could we know what was best to choose it would little avail, where there is no liberty to choose at all. But I am sure we owe one thing to ourselves, which is, to

cultivate cheerfulness by all objects and things in our power, and to call every innocent amusement to our aid, to converse with those we love, read such books as we like, and take such pleasures as are proper. Weeds spring without care and cultivation, but fruits and aromatics must be planted and engrafted; pain and pleasure are in the moral world as the others in the natural; evil comes unsought, but happiness must be courted. How often do I wish myself provided with wings to take a flight and perch on your chimney corner! I am very sorry poor Mr. Percival has alarmed you so often; if he does not suffer from the bad weather now I shall have great hopes of him. I find myself every day growing better; I bathed twice; and, contrary to what it used to do, it raised my spirits and made me feel a greater degree of cheerfulness than I have done since I came to Bath; indeed I want mechanic helps, for my real happiness, God knows, is lessened; and though I have many relations left, I reflect that even this circumstance makes me more liable to have the same affliction repeated; but I will mention this no more; I should rather endeavour to raise your spirits than depress them; so to call a new subject:—Have you read the new French play, called *Le Méchant*? You will not find the comic wit of *Molière* in it, nor much conduct as to the plot, but I think there is a great deal of good sense and morality; the *méchant* is a character one should not think had existed if one had not seen it: I fear it had been still better had it been *La Méchante*; for the love of mere unprofitable mischief I fear the women are most noted; the men are for any ill they can get by, and as

they have more ways of being bad, they are not so idly so as the women. I think the character of Valere, in the play, is not uncommon; a young person of good disposition, but by the influence of bad company made a knave for fear of being a fool, would forsake the woman he loves rather than be censured for constancy, and disobey the parent he honours, for fear of being ridiculed for submission; he speaks ill of people without malice, makes connections without affection, and all this to conform to the maxims of his bad companion; but as he is rather seduced than depraved, he is soon brought back by Ariste, who says many things that I think will please you, and shews the difference between what is true and what is plausible; and indeed the errors and misdoings of those who are not naturally bad arise from not being able to distinguish in that point. I am very sorry for the account you give of Miss Southwell, but I hope when the spring advances she will recover. Why did not Lady Sunderland come to Bath for her cholic? You are very good to say you should not want any temptation to come into Berkshire but what I and my little Sandleford could offer; I will flatter myself that Mr. Percival will be so well as to set you at liberty this summer. You do not mention the little Pere, he does not write, and I want grievously to know how he does. Mr. Montagu and my sister join in respects to you. I am always dear Mrs Donnellan's

affectionate friend, and obliged  
humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Dutchess of Portland.**Bath, 1748.***MADAM,**

I THANK your Grace a thousand times for your kind letter ; but why will my Lord Duke persevere in the gout ? Pray tell his grace it is a shame he should use a crutch while his grand-mamma trips like a roe-buck ; she has been more than parboiled in Medea's kettle, and without the help of a Jason too, without which few dowagers look so smug. Mrs. Honywood has lost her new husband ; the Fates will make her a widow in spite of her haste to be a wife. I hear the Dutchess of Kent is still very ill. Pray do you know Mrs. Trevanion, Lord Berkeley of Stratton's sister ? she goes away from us to-morrow, which I am sorry for ; she seems very agreeable and well-bred, and has a thousand other good qualities that do not abound at our morning coffee-house, where I meet her. We are too dull here to furnish any news or scandal. Whisk, and the noble game of E O, employ the evening ; three glasses of water, a toasted roll, a Bath cake, and a cold walk, the mornings. I cannot say I have yet dared to cast a hope towards London ; my physician says three months will be necessary for me to drink the waters. My constitution may perhaps be still more tardy ; I have yet been here but about five weeks, so half my time is not expired. To say the truth, I imagine I cannot be immediately so well as to make a tolerable figure any where but among invalids. I am forced to dine by myself, not being yet able to bear the smell of

what common mortals call a dinner ; as yet I live with the fairies. I am much obliged to those who told your Grace I was coming to town, as they said something I should be glad to have true ; but here is another Mrs. Montagu who is like me, hath a long nose, pale face, thin cheeks, and also, I believe, diets with fairies, and she is much better than when she came, and many people give me the honour of her recovery.

I am, Madam,  
your Grace's most obliged, most faithful,  
E. M.

*To Mrs. Anstey.*

*Sandleford, 1749.*

Mr dear friend's letters are always welcome, pleasing, agreeable, &c. but the last was delightful, as it flattered me with the hope of seeing you at Tunbridge. Why do you doubt ? Why hesitate a moment about going thither ? The waters are good, the air incomparable, the place agreeable, and you cannot make a better summer's campaign. Rural and polite life are happily associated there ; you may have the most retired, or the most public walks, as you are disposed ; the variety of persons and characters make Tunbridge an epitome of the world. I am apt to regret the absence of those things which propriety endears, as one's house, garden, &c. otherwise I think the Tunbridge life far from disagreeable. The reserve and gravity of our nation is less prevailing there than in

any place where people are fixed in a domestic establishment, and have a little society of their own towards which they have so strict a fidelity as scarce to bestow a look or smile on a stranger ; but in a place of this kind people easily enter into an acquaintance which they can drop at the end of the season, if it does not answer their expectations. You will see beautiful and romantic views ; and the place which is now the resort of fine, gay, and polite people, seems designed rather for the retirement of savages, or sages petrified to savageness. Pray let me know when you set out, that I may use some of those pens which slide so glibly over the paper. I may, perhaps, trouble you to seek me some house upon Mount Ephraim, for, to tell you the truth, I get as far from the busy haunts of the place as I can ; for it agrees neither with my inclination nor health to be in the midst of what are called the diversions of the place. An evening assembly in July is rather too warm ; and tell it not in the regions of politeness, but I had rather see a few glow-worms on a green, in a warm summer's evening, than belles adorned with brilliants, or beaux bright with clinquant. I cannot be at Tunbridge before the beginning of July ; I am engaged to the nightingale and the cuckoo for this month. Sandleford is in its vernal pride ; my orange trees are fair as the Hesperian tree, and without a dragon.

I spent about a week in my way hither at Mrs. Botham's. You may believe I was very happy to be with my friend while she was surrounded with her fine children ; there I acquired a fine girl of ten years old, ready baptized, chatechized, and prettily instructed in the

use of the alphabet either in writing or reading. My little cousin is now at my elbow writing to her eldest brother. Her letters put me in mind of a correspondence that I remember carried on between Cambridge and Brinkly. I am in hopes of seeing my brother Willy here in a few days ; I hope his Latin speech was worthy of a fellow of St. John's. I shall be mortified if you do not favour me with a line by the post after you receive this, to tell me you are going to Tunbridge ; I will never forgive you if you lose such an opportunity to amuse yourself, oblige Lady Romney, and gratify your faithful

and affectionate friend,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*Tunbridge Wells, Sept. the 8th, 1749.*

DEAR MADAM,

THE various occupations of a place like this make one a bad correspondent, and having been a long time very much out of health, I was irretrievably sunk in a debt of letters, which is now something abated ; but I am far from having acquitted myself of the devoirs of a good correspondent. I have been for a fortnight in a most flourishing state of health, which to acquire and maintain has cost me time and pains ; drinking waters, riding on horseback, airing in a post-chaise, continual dissipation, and uninterrupted idleness ; sacrificing still the end of living to the means. Our company is much diminished ; of the many that go there are a few whom one regrets ; and first of the rank of these are Mr. and



Mrs. Southwell. I promised, or threatened, Mr. Southwell to write his memoirs ; in the first place he is l'ami du genre humain, so popular, so complaisant, that I (who am jealous of his favours) want to infuse a little of the zest of misanthropy into him ; then for the ladies from fourscore to fourteen, he is their zealous admirer, and faithful humble servant. I found him guilty on the statute of coquetry with the Countess of Abercorn : old Mrs. Ashley has added a yard of whalebone to her plumpers merely on his account ; and really she seems now to have put a perfect farthingale over her upper jaw, to the great discomfort of her gums, who liked better the soft covering of her lips. You will be perhaps ready to enquire whom I pass my time with here ; why, to my comfort, there are some still left who are agreeable reasonable people. The Attorney-general\* and his wife are my old acquaintance, and amiable agreeable companions ; then about twenty yards from our house lodges the wife of Admiral Boscawen, a very sensible, lively, ingenious woman, and who seems to have good moral qualities ; we often pass the evening together partly in conversation, partly in reading. Lady Robinson† too is here, but so ill as not to come abroad ; but I visit her often on the footing of a country neighbour ; she is very agreeable, and has a charming little family, who are governed with great prudence and regularity. Here are besides three or four sensible agreeable men, some of whom usually dine with us, so that the hours one is to pass, do not go off in the

\* Sir Dudley Ryder.

† Wife of Sir Thomas Robinson, afterwards Lord Grantham, and Secretary of State.

heaviest manner ; and the great amendment I have found by the waters lately, keeps up my spirits. We have not fixed any time for going away ; the six weeks, which is the usual term for drinking the waters, will be expired next Friday : but the interruptions I have met with from illness in taking them, will induce me to stay as long as the weather is good. You know Mr. Montagu is always desirous I should do what is best for me, and the preference which we give to one place above another, is not equal to the difference of health and sickness. If ever I find a murmur arising in me at my weak constitution, I correct it by thinking how few people would be allowed the indulgencies and remedies that I have. We cannot always find those on whom we depend ready to make our health their first and principal object, which no point of convenience or pleasure shall overbalance.

I am, dear Madam,  
your most affectionate and faithful  
humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Tunbridge Wells, the 26th, 1749.*

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR letter deserves many thanks ; it was the most agreeable manner of saying you had forgiven a fault which I could not excuse in myself. It certainly is a duty in friendship not even to seem to forget or neglect ; for though my affection would secure you from the one,

and my respect from the other, yet appearances in some cases are almost a crime, and I am sensible I am obliged to you for pardoning my idleness. Indeed this is a strange place, for one has neither business nor leisure here, so many glasses of water are to be drank, so many buttered rolls to be eaten, so many turns on the walk to be taken, so many miles to be gone in a post-chaise or on horseback, so much pains to be well, so much attention to be civil, that breakfasting, visiting, &c. &c. leave one no time even to write the important transactions of the day. Since I wrote to you we have had a change of persons, but not of amusements; we have lost most of those who by the courtesy of the world are called good company; but of politeness or sense no visible decrease. In the beginning of the season there are many people of quality whose behaviour is extremely bourgeoisie; at the end of it, citizens who by their pride and their impertinence think they are behaving like persons of quality; and each, by happily deviating from the manners and conduct their condition of life seems to prescribe, meet in the same point of behaviour, and are equally agreeable and well bred. Tunbridge seems the parliament of the world, where every country and every rank has its representative; we have Jews of every tribe, and Christian people of all nations and conditions. Next to some German, whose noble blood might entitle him to be Grand Master of Malta, sits a pin-maker's wife from Smock-alley; pick-pockets, who are come to the top of their profession, play with noble dukes at brag. For my part, I am diverted with the medley; the different characters and figures are amusing, especially at the balls, where per-

sons of every age, size, and shape, step forth to dance; some who have but just quitted their leading-strings, others whom it would become to shift into the lame and slippered pantaloons; but who will believe it is too soon to attempt, or too late to endeavour, to charm! But I should be very weary of this place if I had no better entertainment than the absurdities of it. Were I a philosopher, I believe I should be a laughing one; but I might have laughed here till I had cried in good earnest, if I had not found a very agreeable companion amongst them; and it is to some partial representation of your's I owe the pleasure of her acquaintance; you will guess I mean Mrs. Cleland. I am greatly charmed with her; her good sense, her wit, her knowledge of the world, her manner, every thing delights me; she has the vivacity of youth without its petulance; her perfections are so happily tempered they have a moral harmony, if one may use the expression; no note too sharp nor none too flat; her conversation is too gentle to be called wise, and too correct to be called witty; but with that mixture of imagination and judgment which cannot be described or expressed, I am charmed with her to a degree I do not care to own, as I have always declared against sudden friendships. She seems to have almost as much indulgence to me for my honest simplicity of heart, as I have respect for accomplishments, and is extremely obliging to me on that account. Lady Allen has been often ill, so not much amongst us. The Miss Allens I am not much acquainted with; I have given their aunt so visible a preference that I think they may possibly hate me, which, in a Christian sense, I should be sorry for,

but no otherwise, for I detest the ambition of universal empire, even in hearts; I would not be understood as having any dislike to these ladies; I think them sensible, and I believe them good, but I do not think the Graces assisted Lucina at their birth. There are but few whom those delicate ladies breathe upon, and perhaps they thought Mrs. Cleland might officiate in their stead; but I do not discover any traces of her education in them. We have here Lady Parker and her two daughters; they make a very remarkable figure, and will ruin the poor mad-woman of Tunbridge, by out-doing her in dress; such hats, capuchins, and short-sacks, as were never seen! One of the ladies looks like a state bed running upon castors; she has robbed the valance and tester of a bed for a trimming: they have each of them a lover; indeed as to the dowager, she seems to have no greater joys than EO and a toad-eater can give her. I am sorry for poor Lady Egmont; I hope you was not in any way engaged in the last melancholy scene, for your goodness and humanity makes you undertake those offices of friendship which ill agree with your constitution. It gives me great pleasure to hear you are in so good a state of health. I hope you will not quit your retirement at Richmond as long as you can pursue your scheme of exercise. In London one is so embarrassed with human creatures one has no time to think of that excellent animal a horse; though two hours in a day spent on his back gives one more spirits, cheerfulness, and fortitude, than twice the time passed with a moral philosopher or stoic. I have always thought tossing in a blanket one of the best instituted punishments in the world for

slight offences, as I am convinced half of our faults arise from want of shaking the machine, so that it is a medicine as well as a chastisement. I had fixed a day for leaving Tunbridge, but Dr. Jurin thinks I should drink some gallons more water, and I really find myself so well here, I shall be afraid to leave off the waters for fear of losing the joy of health. The Bishop, and Mrs. Sherlock, are just gone from hence; he recovered much by the waters, and has now no greater disease than old age; but that you will say is a complication of distempers. I am glad the little Pere is well, though he does not condescend to write to me; he thinks I am in the land of vanities, and so takes no thought about me; but if I am not worthy of his sacred quill, sure a gold pen, bought of Mrs. Chenevix,\* and given by a fine lady, might write to a Tunbridge dame. If writing did not disagree with me I would send him a long letter for his punishment; but tell him my silence has more anger and disdain in it, than the most pompous words could express.

I am, dear Madam, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same,*

1749.

DEAR MADAM,

I HAVE not so well observed your orders to repair my looks as I could wish. I had a little return of my complaint, which has humbled my countenance; however,

\* The Pere Courayer lived at Mrs. Chenevix's toy-shop.

I am well again, and my nerves and spirits are improved by constant riding on horseback. You need not warn me against too constant application ; my health requires so much care, that I have little attention to any thing else. I agree with you, that learning languages is rather the business of childhood than of persons grown up. A memory fit to receive impressions, and a mind not capable of reasoning, are the properest capacities for acquirements of this sort ; but when we are young we are too idle to seek advantages not offered to us ; and though I will own any one language contains more books than I should ever read, yet the best writers are but few. Books but indifferently written, and the best subjects ill treated, afford little delight. Apropos of books ; I have read the first volume of Mrs. Pilkington ; she has a pretty genius for poetry, a turn of wit and satire, and vanity pour les mettre en œuvre ; she never suppresses a good thought, nor forgets a bon mot, though said seven years before ; her apologies do not prove her innocent ; one sees through her character, but at the same time one imagines nature meant her well in the gifts it gave her, and that a bad education, bad company, and a bad husband, perverted her. It is often said that wit is a dangerous quality ; it is there meant that it is an offensive weapon that may attack friend, as well as enemy, and is a perilous thing in society ; but wit in women is apt to have other bad consequences ; like a sword without a scabbard it wounds the wearer, and provokes assailants. I am sorry to say the generality of women who have excelled in wit have failed in chastity ; perhaps it inspires too much confidence in the possessor, and raises an inclina-

tion in the men towards them, without inspiring an esteem; so that they are more attacked and less guarded than other women. Mrs. Pilkington is very severe on the clergy; but I hope they look on her spite as an encomium. She is very saucy about some Bishops and some Bishops' ladies; but I dare say they are above being mortified by her. The charge of jealousy is a little provoking; it is as much as to say a lady wants charms and a prelate chastity; whereas, by courtesy, all ladies have the first, and all prelates the latter. You must excuse me if I own I could not help laughing at that passage. I thought I saw the lady armed in the terrors of severe virtue, and the good-humoured Bishop smiling with soft and gentle courtesy; and from the good qualities of both, the saucy author has drawn matter of criticism. I am impatient for the second volume, which she promises shall be more entertaining than the first. By the by, what a ridiculous light she makes Mr. Worsdale appear in! A beau dressed from Monmouth-street would not make so absurd a figure as a man setting up for a wit with purchased poetry. Wit and sense are a sort of stock that cannot be transferred; we may purchase another man's house, land, apparel, or furniture, and it becomes our own to wear and use; but the riches, and furniture, and dress of the mind, are not to be so appropriated. I have sent you some small feathers, that you may at your convenient leisure finish me a rose and send it down; it will be honour enough to me if I can imitate. It is now grown the fashion to borrow ornaments for cabinets and dressing-rooms of birds and fishes, and vanity and virtuosity go hand in hand. You are very good in thinking of my brothers;



I grow impatient for their arrival ; I propose to come to town to see them, and I imagine by that time you will have left Kensington. I must leave you to dress for dinner, though I prefer your company to eating and dressing. How few of our employments are regulated by inclination !

I am, dear Madam,  
your very sincere and affectionate friend,  
and humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

DEAR MADAM,

Two days before I received your kind and agreeable letter, I had prepared my pen, ink, and paper, to write to you ; but some domestic affairs prevented me ; I did not design to mortify myself so far with a penance enjoined me by a lay doctor, as not to write to my dear Mrs. Donnellan, of whom I think often, and with great desire to know how she does, what she does, and if she remembers me. I agree with you that Miss Charissa Harlow is a melancholy companion ; her story is very affecting ; and though it wants two of the greatest merits of a narration, elegance and brevity, yet it is interesting and natural ; her virtue is exalted to the highest degree human nature is capable of, with all the assistance of piety, goodness of disposition, the best education, and constant practice of what is right ; her virtue is as amiable as severe, which shews art in the writer, for it is difficult for the same thing to be the

object of love and reverence; and a strict character, like regular features, is apt not to please from its too great exactness. Lovelace is a detestable wretch, constant in nothing but mischief; his good resolutions soon laid aside, and his repentance very short; a shocking levity in the most affecting instances; a character of pride without its usual mixture, generosity; great captiousness without delicacy; a nice sense of blame without an intention of being innocent; the most injurious, and at the same time the most revengeful of men; in short, I think his character unnatural, and that he might have brought about the mischief without so many inconsistencies as are put into his composition. There is a certain connection of vices and virtues, and there is no creature in whom they are not in some degree blended; some shadow of virtue in the worst, some alloy of vice in the best. There is a great uniformity in the character of Clarissa; she is always the same, rising in virtue and dignity to the occasion. Miss Howe's character is very natural, and well kept up; but Hickman and she are not well matched. Mrs. Howe, with her parental authority, is a representative of many good mothers; always in the right because she is old; always to be obeyed because she is a parent; very good motherly logic. Madam Howe was a petulant wife as well as an imperious mother; why did not Miss let her and Mr. Anthony Harlow join their obstinacy, covetousness, and infirmities together? I approved the party. Our screen goes on well. I wish you would be so good as to get Lucas to send half an ounce of French partridge feathers, and half an ounce of the best dyed yellow feathers to you; and that you

would be so good as send them in covers. Pray has not the macaw dropt some small blue or yellow feathers? I desire my best respects to Mrs. Percival. I grieve for the poor tippet, for which I have a grateful remembrance; it was a comfortable friend in cold weather. Mr. Montagu is much your's.

I am, dear Madam,  
your most affectionate and faithful  
friend,

E. M.

*To the Honourable Mrs. Boscawen.*

*Hill-street, Tuesday night.*

DEAR MADAM,

You see with what zeal I endeavour to maintain that place in your thoughts which the good fortune of being your near neighbour on the hill first gave me; though I parted with you only on Sunday night, and hope to meet you again on Thursday morning, I dare not trust even that short interval without entering some claim to your remembrance. If I did not know your present situation to be very vacant of pleasure, company, and business, I should be afraid to indulge myself in this intrusion, and might rather rely on your goodness to cast a moment's thought upon me at a time of leisure, than boldly demand it by letter; and when you are at home with Mr. Boscawen, and all your friends about you, I shall only desire you sometimes to review that part of your memory where you have laid me up; I

fancy you will find me under the article *bagatelle*, several degrees below what you esteem, some distant from what you love, and perhaps not just au niveau of what you like; but still your favours to me, and my regard for you, make me promise myself I shall have some station there; and there are places of so much dignity in themselves that the lowest stations in them are honourable, and among such do I reckon the sacred treasury of your remembrance. It is usual with travellers to give an account of their voyages, but though I travelled by land and water, my journey lying through the turnpike-road, and well-navigated Thames, it will be dangerous to give my imagination its full scope in so well-known a track; but do me the honour to believe, that had I gone the same number of miles in Arabia, or had ferried over the Nile, I would have made elephants kneel to do you obeisance, and crocodiles weep elegies on my departure from you. But, without fishing in the Nile for wonders, I saw at Wickham the miracle of the moral world, a Christian poet,\* an humble philosopher, a great genius without contempt of those who have none; so do not look upon my journey as without a glorious event, or sight uncommon, for I believe, one might travel round the world, and, take him for all in all, one should never look upon his like again. I am charmed with Mrs. West, and approve all you said of her. She is neither a tenth Muse, nor a fourth Grace,

\* Mr. Gilbert West, translator of Pindar, and author of the *Observations on the Resurrection*.

but she is better than all put together. I believe it may be truly said of her,

That she always speaks her thought  
And always thinks the very thing she ought.

Her vivacity, easiness of behaviour, and good sense, delight me. She is quite original, and I think one cannot rank her under any particular species of character without robbing her of something that is truly her own. If one said good, agreeable, amiable, it is still leaving out a great deal; and I do not know what name to give her character, but *pour chiffres*, she should have honesty *pour sa devise*, *la bonté pour ame*, and good sense and cheerfulness for supporters. Mr. West has been so good as to find out a cottage for me, and we propose to go to Wickham on Thursday; I chose that day that I might have the additional pleasure of seeing you, so pray come as early as you can. The pleasure of being near Mr. West gets the better of all considerations in regard to the situation of my cottage; and though it is rather too far from London, I think I shall go thither with greater alacrity than to any place nearer town, where one cannot have such a neighbour, and I hope it will be an inducement to you to visit my hermitage, where you shall be entertained with the wholesome fare of brown bread, sincerity, and red cow's milk, which afford good nourishment to the mind and body; and far away be the poison of ragoûts and flattery, and the modern arts of cookery and compliment;

But such savoury messes,  
As neat-handed Phillis dresses,

served in a wooden dish, you shall be welcome to; and if we can get Mr. West and his wife of the party, we shall have a feast of reason that would please a true ancient epicurean, and stoic too. I am sorry I cannot amuse you with any news or chat of the town, but I have not seen any person who could give me information of that sort. I hear there is great strife and contention between Mr. Barry and Garrick, each acting the part of Romeo every night, and that the ladies think the first makes the better lover, by which one may learn they think beauty a better qualification than sense in that character; for Barry always seems to betray the fool in all the parts he appears in. Lady Townshend says he has sentimental blue eyes; it seems to me the sentiment Lady Townshend admires in Mr. Barry's eyes might bear an interpretation not more elegant than my cousin's translation of *en famille* by the word higgledy-piggledy. I wish you would come on to London on Friday, instead of going to Hatchlands. I believe we shall stay here some time, for Mr. Montagu seems in no manner of haste to go into the country; for my part I repine at losing so many days that one might enjoy in the pleasures of the rural scene; and at this time of the year one is more choice and covetous of good weather. Sunshine at this time, like cheerfulness in old age, pleases the more as it is not the usual temper of the season. I was very glad to hear by my brother that you were better; but pray have great attention to your health, for, believe me, even with the best spirits, one can but just keep up to the mark of content without it; so if advice of physicians is necessary let not any consideration tempt you to neglect it. As

to my cousin, whose ruling maxim is, the more the merrier, she will easily be prevailed on to come to London; and if she gathers mirth by poll tax, this is undoubtedly the place for her. I could wish to get into the country while I am well enough to read and amuse myself; if I carried any sense to Tunbridge, (which indeed I am not sure of) I have dissipated it entirely, for my head feels weaker than ever; if I had laid out any talents in the wit of the times I might account for being so exhausted. Some people reduce their wit to an impalpable powder, and mix it up in a rebus; others wrap up their's in a riddle, but mine and Mr. Plunket's, certainly went off by insensible perspiration in small-talk. I am extremely ashamed of the length of my letter, as it is the first time of my appearing to you in this shape; but pray remember I did not begin with an encomium upon brevity, like good Mr. Dowden, when he designed us a longer sermon than usual; and I really look upon a long letter as the only opiate that does not hurt the nerves; and happy shall I be if I can be ranked among those benevolent writers who, Mr. Pope says, are sleepless themselves, to give their readers sleep. If you ever talk in your sleep I should be glad if you would make my compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Smith, if they should be with you when you receive this. As to my cousin, with all the affection of a cousin, and all the tenderness of an aunt, I greet her; for her sake may every name she bears be made into a rebus, and every object she sees into a riddle. But for her lovers, let them not speak in parable, but in plain and honest English, else her shield and buckler of decorum, the *honi soit qui mal y pense*, by which

she signifies she is not to avoid or understand any expression that is not very plain and unequivocal, may occasion infinite loss of time and a tedious delay of matrimony.

I am, dear Mrs. Boscawen's  
most obedient, obliged, and faithful  
humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*October the 16th, 1749.*

My dear Mrs. Boscawen knows enough of the hurry and bustle of London not to expect the performance of the devoirs of friendship from any of its wicked inhabitants. Had I inhabited the regions of peace, leisure, and reason, I should have told you long ago that I was much concerned at the complaint of your eyes; but I have been in so many shops to buy what I did not want, and in so many houses to visit people I did not care for, and in so many places to learn news I was not interested in, that, for myself and my friends, no hours remained. This sort of life is by no means to be reckoned amongst les égaremens du coeur et de l'esprit; for the heart acts no part in the scene, but is merely attending to the animal œconomy. What is the antidote or cure of the fatal poison of this city tarantula, so much worse than that of the fields, as the dancing is constant, and the giddiness perpetual, and not to be cured by a reasonable degree of exercise;



for we continue this figure-dance in regular confusion till Holbein's universal partner takes us by the hand? Reason, say you, would be the cure; but, my dear, do you think reason knocks at people's doors like the Evening Post? Or comes every morning like the Daily Advertiser? If he comes as a Daily Advertiser it is to people in the country; in town he does not come out above once a year, like the almanac. Reason is an old gentleman, who from the infancy of the world, to this its riper age, has ever found people hard of hearing, and by the necessity of frequent repetitions of his advice is now grown so hoarse he utters but in whispers, and that only when people commune with their own hearts, in their chambers, and are still. After my deserved panegyric on the city of London, it will not sound generous to say I wish you here; but the habit of speaking truth (which I brought from the country) will prevail, and I will confess that before I go out of town I could be glad to enjoy some of your conversation; our departure is deferred till next week. I cannot deny that after the gaieties of Tunbridge, and dissipation of London, I shall be glad to enter into still life. The country does not indeed wear the rich livery of summer, but books will supply the *void* of every season and situation. If one sighs for pastoral scenes, and rural beauty, the fields bloom in description, and look green in song. If human passions are the enquiry, what volumes on the subject! If the actions of men excite our attention and curiosity it is but turning to history; and statesmen, heroes, lawgivers, sit down by your fire-side, and tell you the sum of their merit,

their glory, their faults, and disgraces, which would  
you see still magnified beyond the life,

Read, what in every age  
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.

Or, if the smaller errors, and lesser ridicules of common life amuse you, you may take up the Comic Muse. Thus I suppose you spend your time at Hatchlands, while I know nothing of antiquity but the cry of old clothes, nor any thing good of the present times but hot codlings. The cruel owner of the house near Mr. West makes unreasonable demands; we are going to treat for one about two miles from him, which Mrs. West and he went with us to see yesterday; it is in every thing that I could wish, but that it is too far from Wickham, which I am the more concerned at, as Mrs. West does not love to go so far from home. What a delightful neighbourhood shall we be in! Do not you envy me? In spite of envy though, I must tell you Mr. West says he loves and honours you; knowing him, and knowing you, I did not doubt it, but methinks it was relying much on my generosity and friendship to think I should be pleased to hear it; by which, Madam, I would modestly hint, and decently insinuate, that he loves and honours me too, for he must honour a generous principle in any one, and love an affectionate one; so I think I have made out my proposition in a very logical manner, and given it almost the force of a syllogism, and a syllogism is like a twisted cobweb, though the single thread will not bear handling, yet twisted, and entwisted, by the instruments of rhetoric, it is hard to be broken. But I am in the fourth page

of my letter, and not one word of news yet. Shall I begin with a gentleman who is going to take a wife of his own, or one who has taken the wife of another? There is more zest in the latter story, but more dignity in the former. The Duke of Ancaster is going to take unto wife the daughter of Mr. Panton; the match is at last agreed upon, and coaches, and jewels, and horses, servants, and houses, and clothes, and all the fine things with which Hymen now embroiders his saffron robe, are bespoken. Methinks I repent promising the other story, but having awakened your curiosity, there will be more charity in venting the scandal than in suppressing it, or, at least, so I would reconcile it to my morality. Know then (what never should be known), a certain lady called Mrs. Pope eloped from her husband with a Mr. Hamilton; the affair happened thus: Mr. Pope was overturned near Mr. Hamilton's house, and had his leg broken, on which Mr. Hamilton took him home, and sent for a surgeon, and Mrs. Pope to attend him. Mrs. Pope was so pleased with his hospitality, she returned all the civility in her power, and being tired of her husband, thought she could never take a better opportunity to run away, than when he was so little able to run after her, so away she went with Mr. Hamilton, leaving her consort in possession of her gallant's house. Where they are gone is not known, and were I Mr. Pope, I should never enquire. I am sorry for the woman, as her beauty has been her ruin. She is extremely handsome and foolish; her vanity ruined her circumstances; and pride, poverty, and beauty, are ill advisers, ill suited to conduct safely through a world like this, where the temptations without are suf-

sufficient dangers, without the seducers within the mind. I shall be glad of a line from my cousin whenever she is at leisure, for I am uneasy to hear how you go on. Mr. Ramsey was so good as to call on us, and Mr. Montagu and I went to his house, where we had the pleasure to see some admirable pictures; and then we all went to the abbey, and walked among silent wits, pacific warriors, and historians who did not tell us any lies, even for their party. The town begins to fill; Mr. Carr exhibits silks of a new taste, stuffs of a new pattern, damasks of a new fabric, and writes letters full of mercery eloquence and rhetoric to all his customers, to put them in mind of gowns and birth-days. I had the pleasure of enjoying Lady Sandwich's company half of last week, but she returned into Huntingdonshire on Monday. If I could tell you any more news I would, as it is my rule to tell all I know; for want of invention I cannot go farther; but I want not the assistance of imagination, invention, or any thing but my most certain knowledge, to affirm and declare myself dear Mrs. Boscawen's

most affectionate, and faithful

humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To Edward Montagu, Esq. her husband.*

1749.

MY DEAREST,

I HAD this morning the pleasure of your letter, which was in every respect agreeable, and in none more so

than your having fixed your time for going to Sandleford, as I shall the sooner hope to see my best and dearest friend here. I can as yet give little account of the place; we staid at Lady Talbot's house till last night; this morning we drank the waters, and then went airing in Lady Sandwich's post chaise. The country here is wild and romantic, and we have a charming view from our windows; our lodgings are the best in the place, and we have a very large garden belonging to them, that we taste the rural pleasures in great perfection. As to the joys of society, and diversions of the public rooms, we can yet say nothing, for we have not yet been at the rooms, but propose to go this evening. I shall wish I could procure wings to bring me to you on the terrace at Sandleford, where I have passed so many happy hours in the conversation of the best of companions and kindest of friends, and I hope you will there recollect one who followed your steps as constantly as your shadow; I am still following them, for there are few moments in which my thoughts are not employed on you, and ever in the tenderest and most faithful manner. I am glad you were not displeased at my sending for the chariot; you may indeed truly say you are always willing I should enjoy what you possess; a temper that has made me happier in the share of a moderate fortune than another turn would have done with an immense one; it has endeared every pleasure, and heightened all my obligations, and will ever secure you the utmost gratitude and most sincere acknowledgments. I am glad the Captain goes with you, and hope you will have fine weather, and all that can make your journey pleasant. The charms of Sandleford are strong-

ly in my remembrance, and I hope will delight you, but still I would have you find they want your little friend. Jack writes me word he is well. Adieu for the present; I have as yet had little leisure, being only since twelve last night in our own house; but I hope by another post to write a longer letter; this would be long indeed, were I to say how much, and how often, I wish to see you, and how sincerely I am

your's,

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Tunbridge Wells, 1749.*

MY DEAREST,

MAY this find you in perfect health, enjoying the quiet, but delicate pleasures of the country! I am now sitting opposite to a view not unlike that from your terrace at Sandleford. Tunbridge, though it contains persons of high rank and distinction, does not, from its buildings, make a more superb figure than Newtown; small houses irregularly placed, with trees intermixed, appear rural and romantic, and though the inhabitants of these little edifices may not condescend to own that, as the song says,

To folks in a cottage contentment is wealth;

I fear few of them are possessed of any thing better. Half of us come here to cure the bodily evils occasioned by laziness; the other half to remedy the mental disease of idleness and inoccupation, called l'ennui;

heavy fines raised on wealth and rank, which impartial nature levies on her elder sons, while her laborious younger children neither groan with bodily pain, nor sigh with imaginary dissatisfaction. I imagine the industrious bee has a better relish to the honey it makes than the drone to that it seizes ; though we, who are the drones of the world, are apt to think otherwise, and to pity the labour of their pursuits, and the domestic cares of the cell ; but what have bees and moral reflections to do in a letter ? So, first, I must ask pardon if I have made my correspondent yawn, (a common effect of serious and sad reflections out of place,) and then proceed to what concerns me more. When may I hope to see my best and dearest friend here ? Mrs. Isted tells me she heard you got safe to Reading. I flatter myself the Captain will think Berkshire not inferior to Surry, especially if he bestrides his Arabian steed, and surveys the prospects from Newbury Wash, Greenham, &c. When he is tired of mere cows and sheep, and would behold some of those fair creatures, Father Philip's geese, here are some as fair as swans and as gentle as can be desired, and I hope he will take a trip to Tunbridge. Though the ladies here have not the pretty little feet of the Chinese, and have the power of running fast, they make no ill use of the privilege, and will not cruelly fly from their admirers. I was much shocked at the melancholy death of poor Mr. Ereskine ; I am afraid it will give great concern to my brothers Matt and Morris ; Lord Powis mentioned it yesterday morning, which was the first I had heard of it. Sir Ralph Millbank is here with a great retinue ; I have not yet seen them, for we never go to the walks but in

the morning to drink the waters. I should have wrote you a long letter to-day, but Lady Talbot came in and prevented me. Lady Sandwich seems still to think of going to Huntingdon races, which is a great concern to me, for she is the most agreeable person to live with imaginable ; and we have settled ourselves together in a manner quite easy and convenient to us both. Mr. Joys is going to London to-day, and I hope will bring down Master Montagu with him. We are going to see an old castle to-day, which belonged to an ancestor of your's, according to the Duke of Montagu's pedigree, which grows as near Adam as a genealogist can carry it, and they have marvellous methods of piercing the darkness of antiquity, of which I have an excellent evidence before my eyes in the pedigree of Lord ———, which hangs over the chimney. I desire my love to Mrs. Isted, whom I will epistolize by the next post. My best love attends the Captain. Every tender wish, and grateful thought, waits on you, and may you ever as kindly accept the only gift in my power, the faithful love and sincere affection, of your most grateful, and obedient wife,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Rev. Mr. Freind.*

*Tunbridge Wells, 1749.*

SIR,

To excuse my silence I must give you an account of where I have been, and how employed ; and when you find that I have been drinking Tunbridge waters you



will less wonder I have not wrote, an employment judged improper here, as it is apt to make the waters get into the head, where they have an effect very unlike Helicon; and, instead of a *docte et sainte ivresse*, give one a giddiness and an intoxication that is accompanied with a strange kind of stupidity. I came here earlier in the season than I had proposed, on purpose to enjoy the company of Lady Sandwich, who could not stay here after the races at Huntingdon began. We were here three weeks in great happiness and tranquillity; the place was thin of company, but I wanted none while I had her's; we drank the waters, and walked, in the morning; in the evening we went out together in a post-chaise.\* Her conversation has every ornament and charm, her temper is even and amiable, her behaviour owes its constant politeness to a delicacy of morals; think how happy such a friend must make me! Two days before that fixed for her departure, she was alarmed by a gentleman's telling her Lord Sandwich was very ill of a fever, but that expecting her so soon in town he would not frighten her by a message; this gave her the utmost uneasiness, and she came home and ordered her post chaise to be ready immediately. I did not leave her in such distress, but got into it with her, and we reached London in little more than four hours. We had the satisfaction of finding Lord Sandwich very well, that he had indeed been for a few hours extremely ill, but the bark had entirely cured him. I was very angry with the teller of this woeful tale for depriving me of my friend's company here, and giving

\* Post-chaises were then newly invented by Jethro Tull.

her so much uneasiness ; as I had left Mr. Montagu at Tunbridge, who had arrived here but the day before, I staid only one night in London, and the next day returned in my own post chaise, with the same expedition, as I had gone. I brought Mrs. Medows down with me, who staid here a week ; as she had never seen the place I prevailed on her to take that opportunity of making it a visit. To my great mortification Mr. Montagu was sent for to London on being left an executor to the Duke of Montagu's will ; the Dukes of Bedford and Devonshire are so also : and they have not yet come to any determination what is to be done, and Mr. Montagu is waiting in town for the conclusion of this business. I think, having said much of myself, I should now give you some account of the company here : we have the Dutchess of Bedford, Lord and Lady Fitzwalter, and Lady Ancram, Lady Anson, Lord and Lady Elibank, dowager Lady Barrington, Lady Betty Germain, Lord and Lady Vere Beauclerk, Lady Talbot, Lord March, and Lord Eglinton, Lord Granby and Lord Powis are just gone away, as is the Dutchess of Somerset and her daughters ; Lady Wincheslea, Mr. Edward Finch and Mrs. Finch, Mr. Vane and Mrs. Hope, Lady Lucy and Col. Howard are here ; Mr. and Mrs. Ellis arrived last night ; besides these we have several people of fashion, and of Jews a great and mighty tribe. Within this week we have had a great number of people, but for the most part they rather have added to the number than to the dignity of our company. I was sorry the Dutchess of Somerset left us ; her behaviour was so obliging and so proper, I thought her a good example for persons of great rank ; it is surprising that the princely

state, and princely pride, she had been so long used to, should have left her such an easiness of manners ; she seemed to say and do what was civil without the intention of being gracious. Lady Frances Seymour\* is very handsome, Lady Charlotte,† is not so, but more agreeable than her sister by an unaffected good humour. In many respects this place is inferior to the Bath, in some it is better. We are not confined here in streets ; the houses are scattered irregularly, and Tunbridge Wells looks, from the window I now sit by, a little like the village you see from our terrace at Sandford, only that the inhabitants, instead of Jack and Joan, are my Lord and Lady. The edifices they inhabit are not much greater, nor perhaps is there more pleasure or content among the great and rich who have bad nerves, than with the healthful and laborious peasant. The slow and consuming disease called l'ennui is not known among the industrious, and though, as fortune's elder children, we are best portioned, I know not whether we are most beloved ; I hope not ; as Providence made the system for the multitude I believe the life that the generality of the world must lead is most happy. But, say you, liberal education, the acquaintance with the Muses, the familiarity with the Graces ; can they have had it ? No, my friend, but remember what Mr. Pope says of that portion of knowledge we call wisdom,

'Tis but to know, how little can be known,  
To see all others' wants, and feel our own.

The Muses are too critical, and the Graces too delicate,

\* Afterwards married to Lord Granby.

† Afterwards married to Lord Aylesford.

for common life ; poor ladies ! how they would be tired of the public rooms at Tunbridge. Those who would grow fat in this world should rather wish for a good appetite than an exquisite taste ; ordinary conversation is an insipid, and business a gross food, so the generality of beaux-esprits are in the vapours ; then, for those who are always seeking amusements they find it a painful search ; of this we have had a late instance in regard to our masquerades ; people in town had met one another so often at assemblies, &c. they hated each others faces, and we had masquerades of great expense and shew ; these tired too, and we wanted to be transported to another country. A Venetian masquerade was thought of ; it was called a jubilee ; and a boat was surnamed a gondola, and all people were transported ; a jubilee at Ranelagh, and a gondola on the canal ! Oh rare ! The conductor of this noble amusement repeats the diversion ; all people were tired. Thus has it happened in furniture ; sick of Grecian elegance and symmetry, or Gothic grandeur and magnificence, we must all seek the barbarous gaudy goût of the Chinese ; and fat-headed Pagods, and shaking Mandarins, bear the prize from the finest works of antiquity ; and Apollo and Venus must give way to a fat idol with a scone on his head. You will wonder I should condemn the taste I have complied with, but in trifles I shall always conform to the fashion. I may go to the jubilee masquerade ; or furnish my room with a Turkey carpet, without turning Papist or Mahometan. But to return from whence my digression has brought me ; I own in this place I observe people's chief malady is of the spirits ; ask them what they ail, and they say nothing enlivens

or pleases them.—For my part, when I have health, I think myself happy, but it is not from the amusements I meet with, but from the sunshine of the heart, from something I cannot account for; but it is better than what reason and reflection does for others. May you ever be cheerful and happy from some reason; either from natural spirits or reflection. You are engaged in laudable pursuits, and happy in a worthy and amiable family, and from thence you will find a constant serenity and content. While you preach the duties of content and thankfulness to your parish, you teach yourself the lesson; an attention to them keeps you employed, and the great enemy of human nature is idleness, and the bane of reason is dissipation; all which a pleasurable life would have engaged you in. After all this fine morality I must dress for the ball. I live in too much hurry, though I have got a house almost a mile from the Wells, and have a comfortable dwelling, and a pretty garden. My only neighbour is Lady Talbot, and she is a very agreeable one; as I have a coach with me I think myself best situated here, as I have some hours every day of retirement, and endeavour to think myself in the country.

I am, Sir,  
 your most obliged humble servant,  
 and sincere friend,

E. MONTAGU.

*To Miss Anstey.**Sandleford, 21st December, 1750.*

MY DEAR MISS ANSTEY,

YOUR letter came to my hands during the few days I staid in town to take leave of my brother, who is gone to China; as I was then embarrassed with business, and divers engagements, I proposed writing to you as soon as I got to my peaceful habitation at Sandleford; but on the road I acquired so bad a cold I could hardly see to read or write, and am but just in a capacity to do either at present. Mrs. Medows came to us the day after we came here, and spent a week with us; she went yesterday to Sir Philip Medow's, at Chute Park. A little before I went to London I lost my very good neighbour the Dutchess of Chandos; a stroke of the palsy carriad her off in a few days; her bodily pains were great, but her mind felt the serenity that gilds the evening of a virtuous life; she quitted the world with that decent farewell which people take of it, who rather consider it as a place in which they are to impart good than to enjoy it; her character has made a great impression on me, as I think her a rare instance that age could not make conceited and stiff, nor retirement discontented, nor virtue inflexible and severe: these faults we pardon, and as so often following such circumstances, we look on them as cause and effect joined in almost inseparable union; but there are happy natures which acknowledge no such tie and dependance, and

these only have a right to the respect from age and virtue ; others should be contented if we balance as equally our praise and censure as they do their virtue and vice ; and to a negative character do negative honour. I found the town empty, and, in regard to public diversions, dull. I suppose the new pamphlets come down to Cambridge ; there is one styled an Occasional Letter, which has the marks of a great hand ; it is political, addressed to Mr. Pelham on the late disputes of the ministry ; it is so much in the style of Lord Bolingbroke one can hardly doubt its being his, though he does not own it. There is a pamphlet which amuses me, (by a lady,) addressed to Mrs. Con. Philips, and designed as an answer to her letter to Lord Chesterfield ; it is written with some spirit and argument, but it has the female frailty of displaying more learning than is necessary or graceful ; and the fair one has read *Clarissa* till she has acquired something of the *Preceuse*, and has spoiled her style by an imitation of Mr. Richardson. When your booksellers get the King of Prussia's *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Maison de Brandenbourg*, I recommend them to your reading ; besides the remarkable circumstance of being written by a King, they are really very entertaining ; he is an author of spirit, less timid, and more decisive than the humble pedant in his studious cell ; he writes *en roi* ; his happy confidence diverts me, and I love to see the royal prerogative extending to politics, physics, and morality ; and, to say the truth, the polishing of some of our European neighbours, within the last century, from barbarity to humanity, is amusing, and gives one a

true idea of what our allies the Germans were and are. I mentioned to you the letter written with reference to Sully's Memoires; the Memoires themselves are universally read and commended, and contain the history of the greatest king by the wisest minister. This gloomy season of the year, when nature's beauties fade, turns our thoughts to the animal of all seasons, man; what he is doing, or has done, must engross our present attention; the vegetable and brute creation having withdrawn themselves from our observation, and, I imagine, you have not commerce enough with the living to engross all your time or amuse every hour, so I am leading you to the laurelled tombs of deceased heroes. I was much entertained with your account of the civil wars of Cambridge. I imagine the dispute will be the more lasting in proportion to the frivolousness of the difference; for, to the honour of my own species do I speak it, they contend for nothing so violently as forms, nor dispute for any thing so obstinately as words. I am afraid the Muses will abdicate their seat; if they find the discord so loud their sweet and harmonious voices cannot be heard; for all ladies, even Parnassian dames, desire attention. I shall be infinitely obliged to my dear Miss Anstey if she will endeavour to get a quarter of a pound of saffron for Lady Sandwich, and send it to her by the first opportunity, and please to let me know what it costs. I ask pardon for giving you this trouble, but she is very fond of it, and cannot get any that is good. Mr. Montagu desires his compliments. I beg mine to the dear Mrs. Anstey and your brother. I shall



stay here till the meeting of the Parliament. A letter from my friend will enliven my retirement.

I am, dear Madam,  
your most affectionate friend, and  
faithful and obliged humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

P. S. How goes on your feather screen? If you want grebe's, or any sort of dyed feathers, let me know when I am in town.

---

*To Mrs. Donnellan.*

*Sandleford, the 30th December, 1750.*

I SHOULD have wrote to my dear Mrs. Donnellan sooner, but that I have had a great cold, which took such entire possession of my head and eyes that it disabled me in great measure for writing. Mr. Montagu had a cough, which began to alarm me; but, thank God, it is entirely gone off. Mrs. Medows came here the day after I arrived, and spent some days with us; so that while we had company I had not all the leisure I have at present. My situation now affords me leisure, which you busy mortals in London have no notion of. The great devoir of receiving and returning visits, the necessary resort to assemblies, the indispensable duties of seeing and being seen, reach not at such a distance from the glorious metropolis. I have hardly seen a tree or a distant hill; the fogs having hindered even my eyes from wandering abroad. I have neither been so drowsy as people who are quite idle, nor so alert as those

who are absolutely busy. The polite world has no way of driving away l'ennui but by pleasure, we country gentlefolks know it may be banished by occupation. With great submission to the excellent author of *les Caracteres et Mœurs du Siecle*, one should reverse his maxim, and rather pass one's life à faire des riens, qu'à rien faire. Do but do something, the application to it will make it appear important, and the being the doer of it laudable; so that one is sure to be pleased one-self; to please others is a task so difficult one may never attain it, and perhaps not so necessary that one is obliged to attempt it. We have a loss in not having Dr. Pocock here this Christmas, as we expected. The conversation of a man of letters, and a traveller, is very agreeable in the country. Now I am out of the sphere of attraction of the great city of London, I am as well pleased to hear of some custom at Constantinople as of a new fashion at London; and the Nile is as much in my thoughts as the Thames. In retirement one lives equally to all time, and is a citizen of the world; in society the news, the business, the company of the day, by their nearness take off the attention from great, but distant events and objects. How wisely is this ordered by Providence; for if nearness did not magnify small matters, and distance lessen great ones, a man might be thinking of the labours of Hercules when he should be shaving his beard or cutting his nails; or be cutting through the Alps with Hannibal when he should help himself to a slice of pudding. Is not the association of Quin and Mrs. Cibber of more importance to us than the union of the empires of the Medes and Persians? and the rules of brag than all the institutions

of Lycurgus? But a hundred miles may be as powerful an interposition as a thousand years, and then each object is considered in its natural bulk and figure; then ancient Rome and mighty Babylon somewhat eclipse the present state of things, and heroes dead take more of our attention than living generals, and departed law-givers than existing ministers. How necessary sometimes to withdraw ourselves to the distance from whence we can truly judge of the worth and importance of things! Every prudent purchaser considers the lots in an auction before the day of sale, lest the impetuosity of the bidders should excite him to bid more for any commodity than it is worth. Riches and power may be set up at too high a price, and when we see so many bidding all their moral virtues for them, we are apt to be drawn away by example, unless armed by some previous valuation of them in our own minds. But I did not design to carry my reflections so far; you must make some allowance for my situation; it offers me nothing lively or new, it is the very blank of the year; not so much as a new-born butterfly or fresh blown rose to be met with. My rich neighbours are dull, and my poor ones are miserable. Your friend, dame Wood, is now in a miserable condition; not nursed, as Shakspeare calls it, by base accommodations, she has no borrowed helps from the sheep, or the silk worm, subsists upon æthelial food, and sleeps under the canopy of heaven; indeed I never heard of such absolute wretchedness; she did not come here because she was entirely covered with the itch, so that till the other day, that beef was given to the poor, I did not know what was become of her. She did not enter the doors, but stood

coughing without, the most terrible spectacle that can be imagined ; I would have sent her to Winchester hospital, but they do not receive patients that have any contagious distempers ; however, Mr. Withers has begun her cure, and that of the whole family, who are in this condition. I sent to her yesterday, and she is better, and I hope will be cured of all evils but poverty, and that, I think, is too well fixed in that numerous family ever to hope it may be driven away. I shall however endeavour to prevent her from perishing, and not let this disease of poverty become mortal. I am very angry with her that she has lately introduced another heir to wretchedness and want ; she has not half Hamlet's delicacies on the question, To be, or not to be ? The spurns of office, and the law's delay, are very puny evils to those her offspring must endure ; the world affords no law to make her rich, and yet she will encrease and multiply over the face of the earth. The Dutchess of Chandos is greatly missed by the poor in this rigorous season. There is a family at Donnington castle who are very generous and charitable, but nothing can entirely avail in a part of the world where the manufacture decays ; daily labour must give the daily bread ; occasional alms, like medicine to the diseased, may alleviate sickness, but can hardly procure constant health. To make the poor happy one must make them industrious. I desire my compliments to Miss Sutton ; in the country we always make them in the form of the season ; if you both please to take them from me in that manner, and add whatever you wish for

the next year; and a happy succession of new years  
 days, you will only do justice to the heart of your  
 affectionate friend, and faithful  
 humble servant,

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, the 8th of January, 1751.*

DEAR MADAM,

THOUGH the time draws near for our meeting, I will give you more last words from Sandleford. To shew our admirable constancy with regard to the country, we shall stay the utmost time we first proposed, in spite of wind, rain, and all the horrid features of winter. When the sun darts a favourable ray I mount my palfrey and pursue health to its proper situation, the mountains. I climbed Sidmonton hills yesterday, and paid a visit to the family of the Watermans, whom I found in all the tranquillity of retired leisure, neither busied in the present affairs of the world, nor studying the transactions of ancient times, as historians and poets offer them to our view; for, from the age of the termagant Semiramis, to the reign of our gracious Queen Anne, there have been no events that can rouse the dead sense of solitary dullness; when once we have determined to live by ourselves and for ourselves, we have done with rational, and even animal life, and begin to vegetate apace. Since the operations of the virtuous upon the middle species between the animal and vegetable things, I look upon these people as not in a

state of security; and, to avoid the scissars of Mr. Trembley, I advise these human polypus's to look well to their animal rights and privileges, at least. But to my dear neighbours;—the good man was yawning by the fire-side, the good woman feeding her birds, and pretty miss making essence of lemon. Little awed by the importance of these occupations, I recommended a change of scene, and advised a journey to town; but how near a friend is pride to dullness! pride stepped in, animated his features with a frown, and he rejected the proposal with much disdain of the follies and vanities of a town life. How is it that dullness, laziness, and inactivity, assume honourable names, and thrust themselves into the company of wisdom; while lively pleasures are ever ranked in the train of folly; as if the moment we ceased to be gay we began to be wise. Oh there is many a studious meditative interval between these degrees of discretion! I did not stay dinner at Sidmonton, but after a short visit left them to pursue their nap, and perfect the cosmetic. As I am not quite dull enough to be proud, nor lively enough to be vain, I will own to you that some of the hours I have passed in my dressing room here might have been as profitably spent in Bartholomew fair. Solomon says wisdom crieth in the streets; and indeed those who give no heed to her there, will hardly listen to her in all the silence of solitude. For it is rather the internal tumult of passions, than the external interruption of hurry and noise, that make us insensible to her calls and admonitions. I believe we shall set out from hence on Tuesday sen'night. I am glad to hear our roads in

Hill-street are so good.\* I hope I have so far improved my stock of health that it will serve my ordinary demands in town, and enable me to enjoy the conversation of my friends. The feather work will not be quite finished, so I shall leave a house full of artificers till it be done.

I am, dear Madam,  
your most affectionate and faithful,  
E. MONTAGU.

[T] These letters are intended to convey in them the biography of the writer, which the Editor thinks he could not so well exemplify by any remarks of his own, as by the letters themselves. He regrets, in this point of view, that he has neglected hitherto to insert any of Mrs. Montagu's letters to her husband. When the first two volumes were published, her letters to Mr. Montagu, which are very numerous, were still unsorted. The circumstance of their being without dates (excepting by the post-mark of the day of the month, without the date of the year), deterred the Editor from the labour of the arrangement. He has since placed them in order, principally by means of reference to the letters written to her by Mr. Montagu. From this period he will insert a selection of them, because they contain many anecdotes, public and private, and exhibit the course and tenor of the life and disposition of the writer.

---

*To Edward Montagu, Esq. her husband.*

*Hill-street, the 4th of January, 1751.*

MY DEAREST,

I HOPE the leisure of your retirement gives you time to think of me, and to wish our meeting; the bustle of

\* Hill-street was not then paved.

London does not exclude you from my thoughts, nor prevent my wishing continually for your company. Lady Sandwich's spirits were a good deal revived by my coming to her, and she is very thankful to you for giving me leave to do it. You may suppose, as she was my sole temptation to come, she is my sole engagement here. I have not seen the face of any person else except my sister, who was with me yesterday morning. Lord Sandwich is in town. It is said the King's concern for the Queen of Denmark has hurt his health, and that he looks miserably. There is a report that the Princess of Hesse is in a consumption. The King, to oblige the weavers, has declared the mourning shall last only three months. I cannot hear any public news, except that the Parliament will meet on the seventh of this month, that his Majesty may early repair to that land flowing with milk and honey, called Hanover. Lord and Lady Cardigan are still abroad. My father has reassumed his creative pencil, and I hope will finish the pretty landscape he began for us. Let me hear from you as often as you can spare time, and see you as soon as you can persuade yourself to quit that retirement and leisure you love, and are better able to fill with wise and noble pursuits than most people; but remember here is one who wishes to see you, and is with the most faithful and tender affection,

Your's,

E. MONTAGU.



*To the Same.**Hill-street, January 7, 1751.*

MY DEAREST,

I AM glad you are so far tired of your monastic life, as to think of returning to the secular state of a husband and member of parliament. I believe our predecessors in the cowl had their particular kinds of volupté, which silence, secresy, and peace might much enhance and recommend; but to those who have been used to the bustle and business of life, such pleasures want vivacity. Boileau makes a man who goes to visit the chantry just before dinner, observe the luxury of a prebendal table; says he,

Il voit la nappe mise,  
Admire le bel ordre, et reconnoit l'église.

I have sat so constantly in Lady Sandwich's chimney corner, I can give you little account of the world. It is said Lord Harcourt, Lord Lincoln, and Prince Edward, are to have the Garter: *Honi soit qui mal y pense*. There was a report that the Archbishop of Canterbury was going to be married to Mrs. Clark and her eight children; but Archbishops now a-days do not mortify the flesh at that rate; and I hear she owns with a sigh that the report is groundless. I hear Lord Bolingbroke has left two folios of metaphysics, a history of his own times, and divers other tracts; they are bequeathed to Mallet; but Will. Chetwynd and the other executors do not care to give them up. His estate was entailed. He has given four hundred pounds in lega-

cies to his servants; but it is doubted whether those legacies, and that of his library, will stand good, as he may be more in debt than his cash will answer: and this is made a pretence for withholding the manuscripts assigned to Mallet; though I do not see that any creditors can claim a man's works: I never heard that any part of Parnassus was mortgaged. I shall be very glad when your business is finished, as I shall then hope to see you here; you have too many virtues for the contracted life of a monk, and, I thank my stars, are bound in another vow, one more fit for you, as it is social and not selfish. Adieu, my dearest, remember I long to see you,

And am entirely your's,

E. M.

---

*To Mrs. Montagu, from Mrs. West, wife of  
Gilbert West.*

*Wickham, March 5, 1751.*

DEAR MADAM,

THE pleasure I receive from your letters convinces me public fame sometimes speaks truth, as I am sure it did when I was told Mrs. Montagu was the most agreeable correspondent in the world. As long as I enjoy that pleasure, I shall be less anxious about the remains of Madame de Sevigné's letters, though I have a great esteem and regard for her memory, and have often wished I had lived with her aux rochers, nay sometimes have attended her, dans ses bois, entre chiens et loups. I never liked Madame de Grignan, she seems

to me an affected pedant in petticoats, and too fond of pere Descartes. The account you give of her being so little concerned for the loss of so good a mother, convinces me she was good for nothing, and confirms me in the belief of the story, that she had an affair with her husband's brother, the Chevalier. Perhaps you may think it high time to say something of your cousin,\* after all the kind and obliging things you have said of him; but before I proceed, pray, madam, why may not I have the honour of being your cousin as well as he? I assure you I will not cousin you till you cousin me; so begin as soon as you please. Well! now to your cousin again: he desires his best and kindest compliments to you, and fears he shall not be able to wait on you next week, as both his hands are very lame,† and he cannot walk without the help of them; he can but just feed himself, and play at cards; one of his ancles has had a visit, but I hope he will not have any more this time; and I flatter myself it is all over for this bout, though I always say this with fear and dread, lest I should be mistaken. If the weather should be soft and mild, I propose he shall set forth next Sunday, in the chariot, as the horse is well, and the air and exercise will do him good. Now, dear madam, give me leave to say something about your health: we are much concerned you have been ill, and have still a cough; I

\* The Editor cannot recollect the origin of Mrs. Montagu and Mr. Gilbert West calling each other cousins; they were not related.

† Mr. West's sufferings from the gout are well known. See his poem of the Triumphs of the Gout, translated from the Greek of Lucian,

fear you caught cold here, and after puzzling my brains how you got it, am sure I hit upon it at last; you were prancing out in the morning before I was up, and then out again with the petit marquis;\* and though it was fine over head, it was too damp and cold for a town lady. Now as you got your cold here, it is right you should leave it here; therefore take my advice and come down and see your cousin, and the change of air, and the asses milk will do. Put on ten clokes and josephs; as for flys and shades they will keep out the dust, but not the cold; so leave them. I am sure this advice will do you good, and it will be of infinite benefit to your cousin, and a vast pleasure to me. Mr. Montagu should insist upon your coming; but I know he had rather keep you with him; but for your good he should part with you; if he will not he my come with you, which will be still a greater pleasure to us, and by way of bribe I will give him some more pork, as I find he likes it. What can I do more to tempt him? I can't get Lady S——b; that would do; besides, as you say you have got the house, you should come down and see it. I am uneasy you have not seen it, least you should not like it; I don't like to choose a house or a husband for any body; besides, as Tubby and I both were in earnest when we said you would be always welcome here, why would you not come and see it before you took it? we were both delighted with the account you give of the visit you had from the petit marquis; and I think I see him hopping about from chair to chair, as I always think he is like a pert

\* Berenger, author of the History of Horsemanship.

cock-sparrow hopping upon the grass plot; he is a little man but a great beast; he took Tubby's canto, and was to talk to Burges about my dear boy's inoculation, and we have never heard a word from him since; I suppose he is taken up with the pleasures of the town. I hear he was coquetting with Mrs. Garrick in her box, and seemed very happy; so he thinks no more of his friends here: pray if you see him, reprimand him for it. This was to have come two days ago; but I could never get time to finish it, as reading and other avocations take up my time, and I never begin writing till almost midnight. It would have been better for dear Mrs. Montagu that I had gone to bed, than have troubled her with such a heap of inconsistent stuff, but to those I love, my pen is as apt to gallop as my tongue, so this must be my excuse for taking up so much of your time, that would be better spent. The messenger that brings this is another cousin, but unlike the sparrow, and more like the stork, it is Mr. Lyttleton's brother that lives with him;\* he desired he might keep the letter, that he might deliver it himself into your fair hands. Mr. West desires his love to his sweet cousin. Remember my advice, and come away; good night, dear Madam.

I am,

Your Most obliged and faithful servant,

CATHERINE WEST.

(Saturday night past twelve.)

\* Afterwards Lord Westcote.

*To her Sister.**8th of May, 1751.*

I AM ashamed that I have been so remiss in writing to my dear Sister, but business and amusements have poured in torrents upon me. I was some days preparing for the subscription masquerade, where I was to appear in the character of the Queen Mother, my dress white satin, with fine new point for tuckers, kerchief, and ruffles, pearl necklace, and ear rings, and pearls and diamonds on the head, and my hair curled after the Vandyke picture. Mrs. Trevor and the Lady Stanhopes adjusted my dress, so that I was one day in my life well dressed. Miss Charlotte Fane was Ruben's wife, and looked extremely well; we went together. Miss Chudleigh's dress, or rather undress, was remarkable; she was Iphigenia for the sacrifice, but so naked, the high priest might easily inspect the entrails of the victim. The maids of honour (not of maids the strictest) were so offended they would not speak to her. Pretty Mrs. Pitt\* looked as if she came from heaven, but was only on her road thither in the habit of a chanoiness. Many ladies looked handsome, and others rich; there was as great a quantity of diamonds as the town could produce. Mrs. Chandler was a starry night. The Dutchess of Portland had no jewels. Lord Sandwich made a fine hussar. Mr. Montagu has made me lay by my dress to be painted in, when I see Mr. Hoare again. His picture is thought

\* Afterwards Lady Rivers.

like, but too full for my thin jaws. I staid till five o'clock in the morning at the masquerade, and was not tired. I have never been quite well since, but I had better luck than Miss Conway, who was killed by a draught of lemonade she drank there. I suppose you have heard of Lord Bolingbroke's new work; as it is short, we idle one's in London can find time to peruse it.

I am, &c. &c. &c.

E. M.

---

*To Edward Montagu, Esq.*

*Tunbridge, 30th August, 1751.*

MY DEAREST,

THE application with which you have followed your business in the north, is a most agreeable proof of your desire to return. I am drinking the waters very successfully. As to pleasure, it does not abound in the public rooms. Crowds are generally gay, but there is a want of spirits in our company, which I imagine to be owing to the frequency of assemblies, and the general dissipation of the present life. When the country lady came hither from domestic cares and attendance on her dairy and hen-roost, and her cherry cheek'd daughter from plain work and pastry, the mechanic's wife from attendance on her shop and accounts, Tunbridge was a place of recreation, but now the squire's lady comes from whisk in assemblies, miss from Ranelagh, and the bonne bourgeoisie from Marybone Gardens; it is but the same scene on another

stage. An old French historian, speaking of the behaviour of the English after a victory, says, "Les Anglois, selon leur coutume, se divertissoient moult tristement;" if such be their humour that they can divert themselves but *tristement* after danger and labour overcome, and an advantage gained, how *triste* must their amusements be, when pursued to the neglect of many advantages, and without the contrast of intervals of business and application! Our airy neighbours, the French, have a sort of animal spirits, which enable them to frisk about the fields of joy; English John Trot can go far on a reasonable errand, but he wants the *légereté* that is necessary to tread the fantastic round of pleasure. The Dutchess of Norfolk being indisposed to-day, talks of leaving the place, though she has not drank the water a week. The Dutchess of Newcastle is coming to this place very ill; I believe the unhappy state of public affairs makes her so. "Ambition should be made of sterner stuff." The wife of a first minister should not have weak nerves. She is very fond of her husband, and he has great confidence in her, and trusts her with all his cares and solitudes; a very heavy charge, I should think. As to poor Mrs. Percival, I hailed her voyage to the realms of rest: but for poor Shaw, he might have lived, and laughed, and talked of the deluge, and collected cockle-shells many years longer. The death of those we esteem afflicts us; we are shocked at the death of those we have laughed at, and laughed with, as we never looked upon them in so serious a light, as to suppose so sad an event could happen to them. I would deck his tomb with emblems of all the wonders of the



land and deep; crocodiles should weep and tigers howl; every shell should become vocal; sea weed should bloom immortal on his tomb, and moss, though petrified, lie lightly on his breast. What signify voyages? what signifies learning? Hebrew Professor! Traveller to Memphis! sole witness living of the present state of the Ptolemies! Must all these glories sink into oblivion? How gloriously had he been interred had he died in the perilous pass of the pyramids, and succeeded Mark Antony in the bed of Cleopatra! I hope the poor man will have the satisfaction of being embalmed in the true Egyptian manner, for the more like a mummy his body be made, the more it will joy his gentle ghost. The ladies here are all sighing and languishing for my father's company. His friend, Mr. Trevor, shone out one day in a fine gold coat, and has not been seen since. I am tired of the place, and should have a much worse time of it, if it were not for my cheerful friends.\* We borrow our evening's amusement from books. I have but a slight acquaintance with the Muses, but have love enough for them, never to be unhappy in their company. Though the education of women is always too frivolous, I am glad mine had such a qualification of the serious, as to fit me for the relish of the *belles bagatelles*. You are now in a place very different from this, where all people are engaged in business, and in the pursuit of riches. Their children will come to Tunbridge, for the caterpillar no sooner gets gaudy wings, than he forgets his creeping life, and idly sports in the sunshine of the world. I should be well

\* Mr. Gilbert West, his wife, and his son, who were in the house with her.

pleased with a sight of Newcastle.\* Riches drawn from the bowels of the earth, or gained by commerce, where exchange is still a mutual benefit, present agreeable views of the arts and policy of mankind. Though the coldness of our climate may set coals in a favourable light, I shall be glad to see as many of them turned to the precious metal as possible. I have not enough of the miser, to love treasures hidden and buried. Money is convertible to credit and pleasure; useful in the hands of the prudent; noble in the hands of the generous; pernicious with the bad; ridiculous with the prodigal, and contemptible with the miser. I have a very good opinion of Mr. Montagu and his wife. I like the prospect of these golden showers, and so I congratulate you upon them, but most of all, I congratulate you upon the disposition of mind which made you put the account of them in a postscript. Were we to make petitions to fate, we should put riches in the postscript; by no means forget them quite.

I am, my dearest, ever your's,

E. M.

---

*To the Same.*

*Tunbridge, September, 1751.*

MY DEAREST,

THIS place continues to encrease in company. We have crowds, and very little amusement; and foreign-

\* Mr. Montagu was then visiting the estates of his relation, Mr. Rogers, a lunatic, of whom he was the Committee, and from whom he afterwards inherited them.

ers, and very little variety. The Duke of Newcastle was at a ball last night, given by Mr. Connor, to the politeest part of the company. The busy statesman was written on his brow ; he whispered to the foreign ministers with all the seriousness of a negotiator, though I verily believe he was only talking of Lewes races. Sir Thomas Robinson was no less embarrassed with the business of doing the honours to the secretary of state, than the secretary of state with doing the business of the nation. There are some reflections and characters in *La Bruyere*, which would have fitted them both, but far be it from me to quote them in a letter to travel by the post. We expect those goddesses, the Guinnings ; and Sir Thomas Robinson, after being master of the ceremonies to the French ambassador, and our secretary of state, proposes to be gallant to these fair dames. My father is very gay. Sir William Brown starts many arguments for his amusement. Mr. West reads to us in an evening, and the wit of the last age supplies us, when we do not meet with any in this. I suppose my brother Robinson is by this time returning to the known world ; I expect to hear that he has travelled to the extremity of Scotland, for he is a man of infinite curiosity, and would have " knowledge at no entrance quite shut out ;" those things he cannot examine by question, he will examine by view.\* Discontents among the ministers are still rumoured ; what will happen from the long threatened storm among them I know not, but I believe the loss or benefit will be confined to a few individuals, and relate but little to the general good. If

\* Her elder brother attended Lord Sandwich to Aix la Chapelle in 1748, at the negotiation of the peace.

I were to measure your stay at Newcastle, by my regret at your absence, I should think you had spent much time there ; but considered by the business you have dispatched, my reason confesses the haste you have made. To your prayer that we may not again be so long separated, I can with much zealous fervour say amen. I shall rejoice to see little Sandleford again, and in your company to enjoy the best blessing, golden leisure, which the busy ills of life have taught me to esteem. When one is very young and full of the hopes of inexperience, one looks forward from pleasure to pleasure ; a few years more make us see tranquillity with as great eagerness. I can even bid the " mute silence hie along," and love the negative pleasures of solitude. Wisdom, we are told, cries in the streets, but folly, ever great in noise, cries louder. Young Wortley is gone to France with Miss Ash. He is certainly a gentleman of infinite vivacity, but methinks he might as well have deferred this exploit till the death of his father. M——'s friend, Miss G——, made me a visit yesterday ; would you believe it ? If Paris had been here to give a crab to the ugliest, worst shaped woman at Tunbridge, she would have borne away the acid apple : it is absolutely true. I compared her to hundreds, she was the foulest : I measured her with hundreds, she was the most crooked. If the god of riches does not favour M—— for this enthusiasm, he is an ungrateful deity. To pass through fire to Moloch, is a sacrifice of less horror, than to pass through deformity to wedlock. May health and pleasure attend you ; I shall be glad when they travel with you towards London ; the first you will find has been

my companion, the other you will bring with you to me.

I am, my dearest,  
Your most faithful and affectionate wife,  
ELIZ. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Heys, September 30, 1751.*

I CAME hither this morning to enjoy the quiet, leisure, exercise, and air, one cannot have in London. I am so well in health, that I do not know myself, and I think I am a little like the humorous Lieutenant, that would run no hazards while he was well, though he was prodigal of life, when he had a pain in his side. I am very desirous to preserve this comfortable state of health, and also my plump and jolly condition. My face is no longer a memento mori. I look like one of the goddess Hebe's elder sisters, not ever fair and young, but not so wan and decayed as of late. I met Mr. Marriott this morning, on his way from Tunbridge: he travelled with less parade than last year; no empty bottles to signify there had been wine; no hoop petticoat to shew his society complete; no boy that appeared by the shortness of his habit, to be of his clothing. He was travelling in a common post chaise, at the expense of fourpence halfpenny a mile, the other half being paid by his companion. Marriott's muse, though she has long been hoarse, is not yet dumb. He rhymed on every subject, from the tall Lady Lincoln, to missea no

taller than mushrooms. As Solomon valued himself that he could reason on all plants, from the cedar to the hyssop, so does Marriott, that he can sing of all nymphs, from the Brobdignaggian to the Lilliputian fair. I thank you for taking constant exercise on horseback. I will do all in my power to keep with me the lovely stranger, health.

I am, my dearest,  
most faithfully and affectionately yours,  
E. MONTAGU.

*To Gilbert West, Esq.*

*London, Oct. 31st, 1751.*

DEAR COUSIN,

THE great offenders of our days, of both sexes, have been very fond of writing their apologies; for my part, I had rather employ my pen on any subject, than one so delicate and tender as my own transgressions or omissions; so I am glad that I can now tell you the principal commissions I was charged with, are duly executed. Mr. Linnell told me yesterday, that he was going to send your chimney-piece by the carrier: I hope it will please you; it can indeed make but a very inconsiderable ornament to a fireside, where the social virtues always sit: in London we poorly supply their place in our chimney corners, by marble bosoms without hearts, and finely sculptured heads without brains; however, I am far from thinking the cherubs on my chimney-piece the worst tête à tête in town; they

have lost nothing of their native firmness by being highly polished, nor of their purity by being in the fine world. I was very sorry to hear you had been threatened with the gout. I hope you will hear no more of a distemper that could subdue any patience but yours, a trophy you have never added to "the triumphs of the gout." Poor Dr. Courayer notified to me that he was ill of a sore throat, and could not come to visit me, though he wanted to see me; to make this matter easy, I went to him: I was obliged to pass through all the gay vanities of Mrs. Chenevix, and then ascend a most steep and difficult staircase, to get at the little philosopher; this way to wisdom through the vanities and splendid toys of the world, might be prettily allegorized by the pen of the great Bunyan, and the good man himself, to an emblemizing genius, would have afforded an ample subject: his head was enfoncée in a cap of the warmest beaver, made still more respectable by a gold orris; "a wondrous hieroglyphic robe he wore,"\* in which were pourtrayed all the attributes of the god Fo, with the arms and achievements of the cham of Tartary. Never did Christian doctor wear such a pagan appearance; one would have imagined he had been sent hither from Tonquin, to propagate idolatrous worship. When I ceased to look upon him as a missionary, I began to consider him as the best piece of Chinese furniture I had ever seen, and could hardly forbear offering him a place on my chimney-piece; he asked much after your health, and with so much regard, I am convinced he is still a good Christian at

\* A chintz dressing gown.

heart, though his habit is heathenish. The town is much amused with the story of the disastrous adventure of our cousin, Wortley Montagu, jun., and the famous Mr. Taaffe, at Paris: these gentlemen are both sent to Fort l'Eveque, and from thence may possibly be transferred to the gallies, for having played with a jew at Pharon, with too much finesse; finesse is a pretty improvement in modern life, and modern language; it is something people may do without being hanged, and speak of without being challenged; it is a point just beyond fair skill, and just short of downright knavery; but as the medium is ever hard to hit, the very professors of finesse do sometimes deviate into paths that lead to prisons and the gallies, and such is the case of these unhappy heroes. The Speaker of the House of Commons will be grieved to see two illustrious senators chained at the ignoble oar. The King of France has been applied to, but he says he does not interpose in private matters; so how it will go with them no one can tell: in the meantime, poor Miss Ash weeps like the forsaken Ariadne on a foreign shore. There has been a terrible fracas in the court of the grand monarch; the people, generally credulous, have strangely taken it into their heads, that the Duke of Burgundy is not legitimate, and instead of acclamations and huzzas, murmurs and sighs have echoed through the streets; on the days the feasts were made for the birth of this child; besides this, there was conveyed into the cradle some gunpowder and a match, with an epigram, expressing that they would serve to blow up the pretended Duke of Burgundy. Upon his Majesty's hearing this, the



**gouvernante, sub-gouvernante, women of the bed-chamber, even to the toothless pap-tasters, were all sent to the Bastille; one of the women, who said she saw a hand reach over a screen to throw a paper into the cradle, is since dead. A little knowledge is allowed to be a dangerous thing; had the lady been able to have informed his Majesty at once who threw the paper, she had been safe, but it is supposed the hand that threw it, lest she should discover more, gave her a dose that has silenced her for ever. There is a piece come out, by King Stanislaus, to prove mankind receive more prejudice than benefit from arts and sciences; this is answered by a citizen, I think, of Genoa.\* For my part, I will read the royal writer; I always imagined a diadem the best charm against thinking, but his Majesty of Prussia, and King Stanislaus dare reason, and boldly too. It is strange though, that kings should talk of the mischiefs of arts and sciences, when they, good creatures, enjoy all the comforts and luxuries they procure, without the trouble of attaining any. The Duke and Dutchess of Portland, and Lord Titchfield dined with us to day, and staid till eight o'clock; her Grace enquired after you. I said I should write to you if my head would give me leave, (which by the bye aches intolerably), she desired her compliments. Mr. Montagu desires his compliments to you, Mrs. West, and your son; mine attend both my amiable and**

\* "Rousseau's work, sur la Question si le retablissement des sciences et des arts a contribué à épurer les mœurs."

well beloved cousins ; I hope one of them drinks Spa water, and the other Helicon.

I am, Sir,  
Your most affectionate cousin, and  
obliged, and faithful humble Servant,  
E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, the 17th of Dec. 1751.*

My good cousin was so obliging as to desire to hear from me as soon as I was settled at Sandleford, but ill as I am at present, I should not trouble him with a letter, if I did not earnestly desire to hear of his health.\* I had flattered myself you would pass the winter without any complaint, and that health would make you amends for the time my cousin and you sacrificed to me at Tunbridge. I should be very ungrateful, if I did not wish you a temporary benefit, from what I hope will prove for me a lasting advantage:† this authorises me to say, that if you measure my concern for your welfare, by the obligations I have to you, you will excuse my giving you the trouble to inform me of your state of health, and also of Mrs. West's, who seemed recover-

\* Mr. West and Mrs. Montagu being both invalids, their letters, especially Mr. West's, are too much filled with mutual inquiries on the subject of health.

† Mr. West's conversation had a great influence on Mrs. Montagu in regard to religion.

ing her happy and agreeable spirits, if your indisposition has not again depressed them ; and all this may be brought into the compass of one line, though written in capital letters. Pray have you made a good Protestant of Mr. Hooke ?\* If you cure heresy and schism, should you not have your doctor's degree in divinity rather than law ? I cannot give you a good account of my time ; I have scarcely been able to read at all, but perhaps sickness gives as good lessons as may be had from books, and better a great deal than we may expect from Lord Bolingbroke, who, I hear, will leave behind him a new system of morality, which is to comprehend all speculative and practical things, and to reconcile all that in the moral system, seems to shock and surprise ; but, I believe, my friend, it is not in mere philosophy *to justify the ways of God to man*. As to the rules of conduct to be given by this noble writer, I hope they will not be such as have governed him ; for should they make us what they have left him, virtue would be no great gainer ; none of the boisterous passions of his youth restrained ; none of the peevish or mischievous ones of his old age mitigated or allayed : envy, ambition, and anger, gnawing and burning in his heart to the last. May this find you all in health ; on that subject, only do you put your friends to the expence of a wish, or pain of a solicitude ; a mind like yours has

\* Hooke, the author of the Roman History, was a Mystic, and a Quietist, and a warm disciple of Fenelon. He brought a Catholic priest to Pope on his death bed.

every other felicity in the sweet peace that goodness bestows ever.

I am Sir, with the highest esteem,  
your most affectionate cousin, obliged  
and faithful friend,

E. M.

*To the Same.\**

*Sandleford, the 26th of May, 1752.*

DEAR COUSIN,

I WAS informed by Mrs. Isted, that you intended to return to town in the middle of this week, so I imagine that by this time you are in the empire of China. The leafless trees, and barren soil of my landscape, will very ill bear a comparison with the shady oaks and beautiful verdure of South Lodge,† and the the grinning mandarins still worse supply the place of a British statesman: but as you can improve every society and place into which you enter, I expect such hints from you as will set off the figures, and enliven the landscape into rural beauty. I grieved at the rain, from an apprehension that it might interfere with your pleasure at South Lodge; I hope it did not, but that you saw the place with the leisure and attention it deserves; if you give me an account of the

\* This letter is addressed to Mr. West, at Mrs. Montagu's house in Hill-street, where he was residing at the time, for the purpose of attending the privy council, to which he had been recently appointed clerk. She was then fitting up a room in the Chinese taste.

† Then the residence of Mr. Pitt.

parts of it which charmed you most, or of the whole, you will lead my imagination to a very fine place in very good company, and I shall walk over it with great pleasure. I imagine you would feel some poetic enthusiasm in the temple of Pan, and hope it produced a hymn or ode, in which we shall see him, "knit with the Graces, and the Hours in dance lead on the eternal spring," through groves of your unfading bays. I hope you do not attribute my pleasure in receiving your letters, or readiness to answer them, merely to a Chinese taste. I think it may be owing to a better cause, an admiration of what is beautiful in sentiment and morals, rather than for the fantastic and grotesque in forms and figure: so though I am pleased with the perfection my room will receive from your assistance, and much obliged to you for the trouble you take on that account, accept my first thanks for the more rational and elegant part of my pleasure, the letters it occasions you to write. If Mr. Linnell designs to gild the bird he sent me the drawing of, it will look like the sign of the eagle at a laceman's door. If japanned in proper colours, it will resemble a bird only in colour, for in shape it is as like an horse. I wish these men of art could sometimes deviate into the natural. I approve well of the carved canopy, and for the painted one, I am willing it should be effaced if you think the place will look better without it. I consider such canopies with the utmost contempt, while I look up to that now over my head: my desk and I are placed under the shade of some noble elms which partly exclude the garish eye of day. I assure you I have great attentions to my health, and to enjoy the more of the balmy breath of

this sweet season, my hours either of idleness or occupation are chiefly spent in the garden; of late the bright and fervent beams of Phœbus have sent me under "arched roofs of twilight groves," and at this time of the year I should prefer my sylvan palace to the Louvre, as indeed the work of a nobler architect, and the abode of worthier inhabitants, whose soft notes soothe without the arts of flattery. The heart must want benevolence that is not cheered by sounds of joy, and it is not the smallest and most inconsiderable advantage belonging to the human species, that we are so made as to be partakers of all the happiness, and spectators of all the beauty in the animal, or inanimate part of the creation, while the individuals of other species have only their peculiar share of comforts, and their observation probably is confined to a few objects.

The soul proud science never taught to stray  
Far as the solar walk or milky way,

may, in each grove and meadow, find enough to admire and delight in, and without the helps of science to investigate the great laws of the universe, may, by even a slight observation of his lowest works, adore and thank the great Author with the highest reverence and gratitude. I have for many years had a taste for rural pleasures, which people seldom find during their youth and gay season of life. Mr. Pope says, "ill health is an early old age;" it is so indeed, in bringing on weakness and infirmity, but perhaps it makes one fond of a tranquil life. A cheerful prospect, the song of a linnet, a fragrant gale from sweet shrubs or flowers, and many gentle subjects delight a mind softened by the gentle

decays brought on by frequent indispositions, which perhaps are despised and overlooked by persons in the joy and pride of health. A mind once properly harmonized, may have its tone softened and lowered by sickness, but will hardly be put out of tune ; and if the harmony be but preserved, it is sufficient, no matter for the key. I fear you find your place rather a misfortune, while it calls you from the gentle shades of Wickham, to the dust of Hill-street ; and yet I cannot help wishing you had more of fortune's embarrassments. The first grace is to appear well without rich ornaments, the second, to move easily and well under them ; pardon me for wishing to lower your character from the highest to the second degree. I am sorry to hear Sir George Lyttleton and Miss West are to go to Tunbridge so soon, for I fear they will leave the place the earlier, as they go at the beginning of the season. I hope to arrive the beginning of next month. Perhaps you will receive a visit to-morrow from my brother William, who, I imagine, may pass a day or two in Hill-street, in his way to this place ; I wrote to him my advice to take this opportunity to pay his respects to you, but possibly a little college awkwardness, added to natural timidity, may prevent his doing it. I assure you he is a very good young man, more I will not say, for having for some years had a mother's care of him, I have also a mother's partiality : perhaps you may like him the better for his resemblance to your son ; I shall be glad of every thing that can recommend him to your notice. I am glad Lady Di : has shewn her spirit while it is time ; but surely the young man wants discernment,

not to distinguish between characters so very different,  
as the lover's and the husband's.

I am, dear Cousin,  
Your most obliged and faithful friend,  
ELIZA MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Tunbridge Wells, Wednesday, Sept. 2d, 1752.*

To say I regret the loss of your company at this place, and in my present situation, would very ill express the value I set on your conversation, and I should be cautious of even appearing to fall short in my estimation of it, as it is by that only I can be at all worthy of the pleasures and advantages that arise from it. The weather has been very bad ever since you left us, and many people are gone away, which I less wonder at than to see their places supplied by a new set: as to the change of company on the walks, I regard it no more than the succession of vegetables in the garden: they vary the prospect indeed, but make little difference in the pleasure of the walk, and one scarce observes whether the early primrose, or Michaelmas daisy enamel the pastures. Sir W. Brown has left us; I hear he retreated with discontent; he thought himself ill rewarded for the pains he took to canvass all subjects, and inform all hearers. He has not found out that the wisest man in the company is not always the most welcome, and that people are not at all times disposed to be informed. I hope Miss



Speed likes her hat ; I am sorry she had it not earlier in the summer, such a bergere would bring pastoral life into fashion. Your admirer, Mr. Coventry, enquired after you this morning. I was not at the ball last night, but the misses say it was a very agreeable one ; perhaps they liked it the better as Miss Bladen was not there to outshine them, for so strong in woman is the laudable desire of pleasing, each would have that happy power confined entirely to her own person. I have observed for some days, that Lady Abercorn and Lady Townshend, each determining to have the most wit of any person in the company, always choose different parties and different ends of the room. Dr. Stewart has been here two or three days, but I am not acquainted with him, so I cannot tell you whether he comes here as a physician or an invalid. Pray tell me if my\* Lydia has not a fine little family, and whether you do not think she makes an amiable figure amongst them, though indeed she is now in too weak a state to shine out in her full lustre. Mr. Montagu desires I would say a great deal for him, and tell you how much he regrets the loss of your company ; but indeed I know not how to express either our obligations to you for the time you bestowed on us, nor the reluctance with which one parts with such a friend and companion ; in return I can only wish you every felicity this life affords. I desire my best respects to Mrs. West, and compliments to Lady Cobham and Miss Speed : I wish the fair shepherdess a happy meeting

\* Mrs. Botham, by birth a Miss Lumley, of the Scarborough family.

with her pastor fido,\* at the next masquerade, for I think it is more probable she will meet him there, than under the shady oak or spreading beech. When you go to Bullstrode, make my compliments to the Dutchess, and tell her I propose to write to her as soon as I leave the stupifying springs of Tunbridge, which might petrify a genius to a dunce: think what must be their effect on an ordinary brain! However, I am not so stupified as not to know ten thousand reasons why I should be ever Mr. West's admirer, friend, &c. &c.

ELIZA MONTAGU.

---

*To her Sister, now Mrs. Scott.†*

*Tunbridge, the 14th September, 1758.*

DEAR SISTER,

To my great comfort we leave Tunbridge on Monday. I propose to go to Hinchinbroke in a few days. I long to see poor Sandleford: I shall not find it in beauty; it will have lost its vernal honours, but quiet and leisure will be there. Sir Dudley and Lady Ryder came hither about ten days ago; she enquired after

\* Miss Speed married the Comte de Viri, Minister from the King of Sardinia.

† Mrs. Montagu's sister married George Lewis Scott, Esq. She formed a very intimate friendship with Lady Barbara Montagu, sister of the Earl of Halifax. They lived together many years until Lady Barbara's death. Mrs. Scott published the life of Theodore Agrippa D'Aubigné. The life of Gustavas Vasa. Also Sir George Ellison, and Millennium Hall, two novels.

your health, and desired I would tell you she would have wrote to you, if she could have wrote as well as you do; I told her you had so great a regard for her, I was sure her letters would give you great pleasure. I am charmed with the attorney-general; so much cheerfulness and ease in a man so engaged in business surprises me; it must be a strong mind that does not find itself incumbered and embarrassed in such employments, and an amiable one that is not hardened by them. The attorney was sent for to London yesterday in haste, I presume to the privy council; they are to return on Saturday, and dine with us on Sunday, which will leave a better impression of the pleasures of Tunbridge than I should have otherwise. I am glad Lord and Lady Halifax are coming to Bath, as it will be a great pleasure to Lady Bab. Lady Dupplin, I suppose, is converted from a love to consecrated oil, and the hope of extreme unction, for she is a lover of grease: I suppose she has a dispensation to forbear the use of holy water; she has an abhorrence of all kinds of ablution. I never saw a place more entirely disagreeable than this is now; I sigh for Monday. The weather is so bad, one cannot walk, and I have no amusement during the drinking the water, but hearing a parcel of strange folks tell their diseases and their dreams. Mrs. Barker (our Bath friend) held forth an hour, to prove that if she had gone away yesterday, she should not have been here to day, and though perhaps your limited understanding may not see a possibility of denying the proposition, after she had talked an hour upon it, I began to doubt, and to avoid a dispute, for I felt myself in-

turned to the other side of the argument, I rose up and went to the other end of the room, but I hope this duplicity only regards Mrs. Barker, for I should be inconsolable, if, going away on Monday, I should find myself here on Tuesday. I had a great loss of the Russian Ambassadress, she was all that was left of our party, and she is lively and agreeable, and I had got over the shame of speaking bad French. I like Lady Ryder extremely, but she ran away with her husband yesterday morning.

I am,  
 your most affectionate Sister,  
 and sincere Friend,  
 E. MONTAGU.

*To Edward Montagu, Esq.*

*Heys, 7th October, 1752.*

MY DEAREST,

YOUR letter from Canterbury was an agreeable instance how readily you embrace all opportunities of making me happy. I was truly rejoiced to hear you got so far on your journey safe and well, and am glad you contrived to pick up some amusement from objects on the road. I can easily imagine the tower of the Cathedral shewed a fine prospect, as the environs of Canterbury are rich and well cultivated, and the whole face of the country is adorned with many fine features smiling with peace and plenty. The inside of the Gothic building is fine, and its silent inhabitants present

to one's mind some of the most eminent characters in the British annals. The turbulent Becket lies there as quiet as a parish priest, neither his own presumption as in life, nor others credulity as soon after his death, rendering him formidable or respectable. The black Prince's tomb demands perhaps more lamentations from a true Englishman than the more recent loss of another Prince of Wales. Edward was a patriot Prince without a Bolingbroke for his preceptor. Civil government had not then been treated by the pens of the learned, nor was policy the study of men retired, but the generous, wise, and brave, from the suggestions of their own minds, knew how to protect liberty and encourage arts. What shall we urge in favour of ages of refinement, if in the more rough and rude ones, when virtue was less in theory, it was more in practice? must we think the world, like an old man, reasons wisely, but is grown too weak for actions of great force and moment? in all things this age can discourse more aptly than the former, but whoever reads the annals, will hardly give us the palm of victory and preference. I was airing this morning, and I took more pleasure in the fine weather, as I hoped you were partaking its pleasures and benefits. The country looks very beautiful, the shades of autumn improve the landscape, but they suggest the approach of winter, so that one loses by reflection, the pleasure one receives by sight; the robin's notes, gentle as they sound to the ear, threaten the mind with the rough season of the year. I am sorry your horse does not like hard road, for the ways about Horton are very stony. A dull horse is like a dull friend; one is safe, though not much delighted in his company; I had ra-

ther trust you to an animal whose vivacity is not greater than his discretion; but if want of spirit make him stumble, harm may happen that way; so pray take care. Adieu! my dearest, may you find amusement every where, but the most perfect happiness with her, who is by every grateful and tender sentiment,

Your most affectionate  
and faithful wife,  
E. MONTAGU.

*To Gilbert West, Esq.*

*Sandleford, the 26th November, 1752.*

MY most amiable and valuable Cousin,

YOUR letter, like manna in the wilderness, was a very sweet and pleasant refreshment, seasonably and kindly bestowed, and rather wished for than expected or deserved by one in a distant and desolate situation, while you live within the sphere though not in the centre of the world's business and pleasures. You talk of courts and councils, of kissing the hands of Kings and Princes, and such things as in my sequestered bower were totally forgotten. You introduce me to a known world when you carry me into a garden planted with firs and laurel, and you offer them to me for subjects of moral reflections, for which, as you rightly judge, I have by nature and circumstances, all the leisure and dullness from whence they usually proceed. You seem so satisfied in your choice of plants, it would be barbarous to say any

thing against so well weighed an opinion, and perhaps, considering how small a part of time they share,

That are both wondrous sweet and fair,

you may do best to prefer the lasting to the delicate beauties of nature : however, I am far from thinking, as you seem to do, that you have triumphed over the power of Time. You have deferred to him as men do to a tyrant in a rigorous government, where the penalty of sumptuary laws imposes an involuntary temperance in luxury and ornament, and they can escape the fine only by homely plainness and rigid simplicity. There are animals and vegetables whose existence is bounded by the evening and morning of the same day, and we should probably laugh, if the day-fly on the day-lily was to complain of the frailty of its habitation ; yet when the changing mind of man is seeking permanent objects, it is much the same case. I have generally seen that the possessors of the most fading subjects were weary of them before their decay. Indeed, Cousin, you must let me laugh at so ill-grounded an hope as that of unwearied pleasure in unvarying objects. That you may not be too vain of your ever or never-green garden, remember that while you avoid the winter, you exclude the spring, and forbid the glad return of the vernal season, as well as the sad approach of autumn. In your garden and in your life, may all that is necessary for shade, for shelter, and for comfort, be permanent and unchanging ; may the pleasures and aromatics be various, successive, sweet, and new ! The shades of Pindus alone afford delight at this inclement season of the year. There the beams of Phœbus give light and warmth, the

zephyrs breathe soft gales, and incessant music fills the grove. However, I do not resign all pretension to a walk round Wickham gardens, because I prefer your province in Parnassus, to your territory in Kent; but I must most admire those plants of celestial seed, where the sweetness of the rose and delicacy of the lily, are joined to the permanency of the evergreen, and will flourish in unfading bloom through ages. I shall be much obliged to you, if, when you see the incomparable Mr. Bower, you will get of him the second volume of the History of the Popés, Mrs. Isted having mislaid the receipt, I never sent for it; but I have almost finished Mr. Hooke's history, and I do not care to quit the city of Rome till I have seen the establishment of its spiritual monarchy. Strange that it should become the mistress of the world both by Mars and the Prince of Peace: and I think it must be more amusing to observe, the subtile arts of policy "creeping obliquely to its treacherous ends," than the violence of heroic valour, and the open force of

"Reckless ambition, that right onward wends."

Indeed I have been sometimes almost out of patience at the Romans for "fighting still, and still destroying," adorning their city with military triumphs, but not with the great ornaments of human society, sciences and arts; they subdued barbarians, but not barbarity; their liberty indeed they nobly maintained, but she is a rude divinity by herself, chiefly valuable as the mother of science, "the fairer daughter of a mother fair." I admire Mr. Hooke more than the Romans he writes of; he seems to have the spirit of liberty, with all the arts



she protects. I have been much obliged to him for many agreeable hours; the great events of history make a pleasing variety, and chequer well with the little details of life. To go from the toilette to the senate-house: from the head of the table to the head of an army; or, after making tea for a country justice, to attend the exploits, councils, and harangues of a Roman consul, gives all the variety the busy find in the bustle of the world, and variety and change (except in a garden) make the happiness of our lives. But alas, how poor is the present instant, that it is forced to beg its amusement of times past, or to come; the departed, or the unborn hour, must lend events or hopes to entertain the present minute. Life is like the tragedy of Hamlet, there must be a play in a play, one table and fable included in another, to bring on the catastrophe, and fill the spaces with amusing representation. If you please to leave Mr. Bower's history with Ann, I shall order it hither some time hence, when I send for some other things. Do not forget my compliments to the author, I am sure he well deserves them, while I am owing so excellent an entertainment to his labours; I suppose he is settled in town by this time, and then the Madonna\* will be glad to find him when she returns to the regions of life. I have just received a collection of letters, wrote by Madame de Maintenon, though Voltaire has diminished my opinion of her in some degree; yet I have an impatience to open the book:

\* Mr. Bower wrote frequently to Mrs. Montagu in Italian. The name of Madonna was applied to her also by Lord Lyttelton and Mr. West.

I shall like to see what alteration there is in her from the wife and widow of poor Scarron, to becoming the consort of Louis le Grand. I see the first letters are written in her humble state ; I have but this instant opened the paquet, and I must write two letters, and walk two miles before I can give audience even to the great Maintenon : you will imagine that I am in extraordinary health, when I talk of walking two miles in a morning.

I am, dear Sir;  
Your sincere and most affectionate friend  
and cousin,

ELIZ. MONTAGU.

*To the Hon. Mrs. Boscarwen.*

*Dec. 24th, 1752.*

I PROPOSED answering my dear Mrs. Boscarwen's letter yesterday, but the Chinese room was filled by a succession of people from eleven in the morning till eleven at night. I am glad Madame de Staal amused you, for I cannot help thinking it is possible to want amusement by the fire side in the country ; Madame de la Ferté's character, I believe, must appear more natural to the French than to us ; and yet even in our country, where there is so much less of vivacity and changeableness of disposition, one has seen what is not unlike it in people whose rank and fortune have allowed them to indulge every humour and caprice. I cannot say that I love Madame de Staal well enough to pity her so.

much as her misfortunes deserve ; adversity mends her head, but not her heart ; her reason is improved, but not her temper. For my part I own myself a severe critic in temper ; talents of the understanding are the gifts of heaven, and of those only to whom much is given, much should be required ; but it seems to me, that all people have it in their power in a great degree to mitigate the faults of temper ; the wise should do it that they may be loved, the foolish that they may be endured. I know if M. de Staal was looking over my shoulder, she would say I could not pardon her pettishness because I looked upon her as a chambermaid ; and that the same fault in the Dutchess of Maine would have offended me less : I will allow this in part, for the Dutchess never felt the misery of peevishness and of insolence from a superior ; and was therefore less apprized of the ill she did in tyrannizing over her attendants, than M. de Staal in teizing her servants ; but if it was a greater crime in the inferior, it would have been a greater indecorum in the great lady. Persons in a high rank ought to be well instructed in all their duties, and acquit themselves of them with grace as well as justice. I cannot say I was very much amused with the Memoirs ; as they were recommended, I read them ; as you observe, they agree with my opinion of a court ; and yet they have more of the miseries of servitude than of the evils of a court in them ; personal jealousies, little tracasseries, and the business of faction are not there described, as royal power was not belonging to that court ; nor is there set forth the wretchedness “ of

That poor man that hangs on princes favours;  
 There is, betwixt that smile he would aspire to,  
 That sweet aspect of princes and his ruin,  
 More pangs and fears than wars and women have."

But this testimony, you will say, is given by Woolsey, descending from the ladder of greatness; and it is true, those who are ascending have their heads too giddy to form any serious judgment. In ambition they judge worst who see the objects nearest. The papers will inform you of the filling the places, with at least as much certainty as I can do; our friend, the amiable Miss Pitt was with me last night; she desired me to say she loves and honours you. If Mr. Botham has Homer's *Odyssey* I recommend it to your perusal; Penelope is not at all like Madame de la Ferté.

Adieu, dear Madam.

---

*To Edward Montagu, Esq.*

*Heys.*

MY DEAREST,

I HOPE this will find you safe and well at a place where I am sure the society will be pleased and happy to receive you. It adds much to the mortifications of infirm health that it incapacitates me for visiting my friends. I suppose you will see the place with great veneration, where your consort's virtues, charms, and accomplishments were ripened into their present state of perfection. I hope the sight of so many merry bachelors does not revive in you the love of a single state; their's is the joy of the wicked, not the pure com-

forts of a holy state like matrimony : if they can laugh, it is well, and while they are young and gay their condition is not to be pitied, but when they come into the lean and slippered pantaloons, then they will find their condition most sadly forlorn. Poor Mr. Brockman is the only man truly sensible of the evils of celibacy, and he weeps and will not be comforted, as all unmarried men should do, were they truly sensible of their misfortune.

My sister writes word that the Duke of Cumberland was received with great affection by the populace at Bath ; they called him their Joshua, their deliverer, the saviour of their lives and liberties, and the town was quite crowded by people who came from the neighbouring villages. Miss G—— has given her name to her husband ; indeed if he accepts her person he may take any thing else that belongs to her. Lady Sandwich gives me a good account of her son.

Mr. Bower and his wife are to come to me on Friday, and stay till Sunday or Monday ; he is a very merry entertaining companion ; he left all gloominess in that seat of horrors the Inquisition. I breakfasted with him on Tuesday ; he is but between two and three miles from Heys ; his wife is civil and silent, so, I asked her to come over with him. I never saw any country more beautiful than about Chislehurst, where he lives ; I cannot say much in praise of his habitation, which he calls his Paradiso ; but indeed to a mind as gay and cheerful as his, all places are a paradise. He is much engaged with those old ladies the popes, but says he will leave the Santi Padri for his Madonna ; he will teach me the pronounciation of Italian, which he has reduced into such a method, it may be

easily atquired. He taught it to Mr. Garrick at Tunbridge.

I lament that I am not with you ; besides the pleasure of seeing my brothers, I should have reviewed with satisfaction the place where I spent the careless days of infancy, and the more gay ones of early youth. To the fair the years from fifteen to twenty are very agreeable. While we are pleasing, we are pleased ; so grateful is the heart of woman. The wise man was mistaken, who allied vanity to vexation ; he might have made the latter tread on the heels of the former, but they seldom go hand in hand. The king will be over by the tenth of next month, but the yachts are not ordered, as the papers have said. My love to the gentlemen of Horton.

I am, my dearest,  
your most faithful, affectionate,  
and obedient wife,  
E. MONTAGU.

*To Gilbert West, Esq.*

*Sandleford, 6th of January.*

My most excellent and honoured Cousin,

I TAKE the first opportunity to return my most sincere thanks for the acceptable favour of your last letter. The wounds friendship has made, friendship can best medicine. I have on this melancholy occasion found the strongest proofs of regard from all my friends, and one is never more touched by them than when one's,

heart is tender and sore with affliction. I know not what I said in my letter, for my mind was so shocked at my arrival here, that for some days I was insupportably low. I find by yours that my letter was very short, I am now better able to attend to the voice of reason and duty, and you have with the utmost force, as well as tenderness, urged their best arguments. I will own myself to blame for not calling them sufficiently to my assistance, assured as I am, I should not then have sunk so low. A friendship begun in infancy, and reunited by our common loss and misfortune, had many tender ties. I agree with you, that my friend was not happy, but she grew daily more contented. By tender care, I had raised her from despair almost to tranquillity. I had hourly the greatest of pleasures, that of obliging a most grateful person. That I did thus hourly please her, was her merit, not mine, for she made every employment undertaken for me, and every expression of my satisfaction in her execution of those employments, a pleasure. The servile ministry of millions of mercenary or timorous slaves cannot give the pleasure I received from her kind offices, which, however considerable, still fell short of the zeal that prompted them. Of this you can have no imagination, unless you had known her intimately, nor do I know there is a pattern of it left in the world. She was much endeared, and her loss embittered to me by another consideration, which you may reasonably blame, as it shews too fond an attachment to those things which we ought to resign to the Great Giver; but while she was under my care, I thought a kind of intercourse subsisted between me and a most dear and

valuable friend whom I lost this time five years. Whatever I did for her, I thought done for that friend, on whom my affections, hopes, and pride, were placed: but alas! what are affections, hopes, and pride, founded on any mortal subject? *Oh death, all eloquent!* that can confute all arguments of hope, dependence, and every affection our nature is most prompt to! Pardon me for having said so much on subjects that relate merely to myself, but I know you are not only sorry for my affliction, but for the want of submission and resignation that may have appeared in it, and also for my not having present to my mind the consolations to be found in the great truths you have so constantly set before me, and enabled me to see; but indeed I hope that some part of my dejection was owing to a kind of seizure that came too quick upon me to be opposed by thought. I have spent my hours in application to the book of consolation; but that truly heavenly temper, which in others is a momentary effort, is in you become a habit. So fixed and settled are you, and so "well principled in virtue's book," you can never on the most sudden occasion, fall into confusion and error. May you ever enjoy without a cloud, "the soul's calm sunshine," and win by example, as well as convince by argument! I am pleased with the track your son has fallen into at Oxford; a course of reading and conversation with men of learning and solidity will direct that vivacity which is an advantage, if well employed, if not, it is nothing. I sent him Rollin's History, which I fancy he will like better than the Universal History. Some knowledge of ancient history is necessary, a very exact or enlarged one, perhaps, not



so. Voltaire, and Lord Bolingbroke, historians of later ages, speak with much contempt of ancient history, and certainly if they mean that it does not give a knowledge of the present state of nations and interests of Europe, they are very much in the right, but to attain a true knowledge of human nature, what can be better than to study the unsophisticated man of ruder ages?

When we consider what discoveries in philosophy have been made, how many arts have been improved, how easily by printing each improvement in science is communicated to all nations, and how safely conveyed through ages, we are tempted to think meanly of the ancients. One might imagine all Newton's light, and Bacon's sense, entering the mind of every attentive reader; that each age should stand on the eminence raised by the former, "till mountains, heaped on mountains, reached the skies;" but alas! we know by experience it is otherwise. Great improvements are made by the extraordinary portion of intellectual gifts in individuals, not the inheritance and succession of ages. From Archimedes to Sir Isaac Newton, what a chasm! The only great and perfect in art or science, are the self taught. A man of lively and agreeable imagination has suggested many pretty arguments why a blind stroller should write the best epic poem;\* he might as well have accounted for his stature, or the colour of his hair: it was owing to certain properties of the individual man called Homer. Could he tell us why the supple courtier of Augustus, and hum-

\* Blackwell's life of Homer.

ble companion of his minister, should be the best satirist? There are geniuses superior to all impediments, and some who have made to themselves times and occasions, and have risen to the utmost degree of human perfection among the rude and the illiterate; and is it not worth a person's attention to examine these great and original characters? But in these ancient histories there is a mixture of fable, and in modern history, of lyes. A fable may show something of the genius or customs of the people; a party lye does not. The account you give me of a certain lady gives me much pleasure; for the sake of some very amiable and respectable persons, I wish her conduct may be such as may contribute to their honour, and happiness; I wish her to be right for her own sake. I have not great malice against those who, knowing, misrepresent me, less still to such as not knowing, mistake me. It is said by some writer who honoured women (and perhaps geese) less than they deserve, that few women have the virtues of an honest man. If it be so, a little of the blame must fall to the share of the men, who are more easily deluded than persuaded into any compliance. This makes the women have recourse to artifice to gain power, which, as they have gained by the weakness or caprice of those they govern, they are afraid to lose by the same kind of arts, addressed to the same kind of qualities; and the flattery bestowed by the men on all the fair from 15, makes them so greedy of praise, that they most excessively hate, detest, and revile every quality in another woman which they think can obtain it. I shall give Mrs. Donnellan the pleasure of knowing the civil reception my cousin

found at the Bishop of Cloyne's; I did not doubt of his lordship's shewing respect to your son, for though he wears lawn and petticoats, he cannot be angry at merits superior to his own, or jealous of that which is equal to it.

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*The 13th of January, 1753.*

MY MOST EXCELLENT COUSIN,

MR. ISAAC will do my letters most unmerited honour if he considers them as newspapers. Fame's mighty trumpet has no notes loud enough to reach my ears at Sandleford, nor of the lies she whispers, or of the truths she bawls, can I hear or repeat one syllable. Most things misunderstood, are misapplied, but the destination of my epistles to the service of the cook, to singe a fowl, or guard the bottom of a minced pye, was a judgment worthy of the wisdom and justice of a Minos or Rhadamanthus. I am much obliged to your amiable brother and Mrs. Temple West for their kind concern for my health; the good wishes of those one esteems, are almost equal to the blessings they desire for one. I am extremely glad that your manner of being in town will be such as will render yours and Mrs. West's residence there agreeable to you both. Good humour and good order seem to regulate the family you are to be in; together they make an excellent menage: I

cannot think they will in such manner preside at the feast of those very discreet virgins, Mademoiselles Lant and Torriano. How came they to think of so jolly a matter as a feast? I think I see them marching round the porridge pot, and singing,

Double, double, toil and trouble,  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

I am very glad Lord Temple is out of danger; his good humour, cheerfulness, and his civility to your son, have recommended him much to me. I am sorry that Mr. Pitt is not in good health. I know it will give you great concern; however, consider the care, skill, and exactness with which nature has fitted up his head, and pardon her for some little neglects in the finishing his stomach: ample amends has been made to him for some want of bodily health. Consider how much worse is the lot of such who have the same infirmities of body without the extraordinary gifts of the mind. Then, indeed, cousin, they are grievous, but one is used to bear them, and patience becomes a habit where suffering is so. I hope Mr. Pitt will next season try the Tunbridge waters; they succeed sometimes when the Bath fails. Pray in your next, let me know what account you have heard of Mrs. Anne Pitt, who, I fear, is in very bad health. I suppose Mr. Pitt has exercised his magic on your garden: let me know how he liked your Gothic seat. When such persons as Sir George Lyttelton and Mr. West pass a week together, one may imagine the time is not spent in mere unprofitable talk; by some things Sir George said to me, I imagined you would together apply to the finishing of a work of which I have

heard you speak. You said something when I was at Wickham, of a discourse on miracles: I do not doubt of your treating any subject with a peculiar happiness, but of all subjects, it is the most nice in a philosophical and sceptical age. Arguments of equal credibility are not always equally believed. The regular process observed by nature in her ordinary productions, and the causes of many extraordinary appearances being now discovered, the philosophers are averse to a belief of miracles. An experience that many things formerly considered as such, were but in the ordinary course, and regular effect of certain powers and qualities, and frequent detection of imposture and fraud in those who pretended to miraculous powers, have together rendered men's minds more averse to that subject, and less open to the conviction of such proofs, so that they raise up both physical and moral objections to such arguments. Excuse me therefore if I say, they are of all the evidences of the Christian religion, what are at present least likely to meet with a candid reception. You did not mention any thing more than barely that the miracles were the subject of your writing; excuse me, therefore, for what I have said, and believe my concern arises from the most tender and zealous regard to the cause, and its advocate. I should be sorry to see the peace of a good man disturbed, and the pen of a wise one engaged in the impertinent and unprofitable sophistry of controversial writings; indeed there are many prating, but few writing, free thinkers; however, there are always some who can cavil and dispute. I do not mean that I would not wish you to employ your talents in so noble a cause as that of religion, but I

would wish them so engaged, as would be most likely to do good to others, and not occasion you any trouble. Our Saviour himself did not urge those truths which he thought his disciples at that season not prepared to receive. I have lately read Mr. Locke's discourse on miracles, and I think, from his very definition of them, it is a difficult subject to write on in such a manner as to give any new light, or higher probability than they carry to every reader, from the account as you have it in the New Testament. I am at present reading Dr. Clark's evidences of natural and revealed religion, which I think a most incomparable work. I know not what offence might be taken by churchmen, at his disagreement with some orthodox opinions, but as a Christian queen, I should have thought he deserved the Archbishoprick of Canterbury, and all the honours and rewards that it was possible for him to enjoy. One cannot help grieving he had not his reward in this world, but one rejoices to know he cannot have missed it in another. I have heard that the queen had a mind to have preferred him to the highest dignitaries of the church, but his brethren opposed it. I should be sorry to believe that a man who so well demonstrated the being of a god, and set forth the truths of the gospel, and enforced the moral obligations by every argument, should have been thought deficient in good doctrine. I cannot help thinking I have just run into two great absurdities, one in supposing you could want advise, another in imagining I was fit to give it to you: the first, I can hardly imagine, the second much less, but where one is much interested for a person's happiness, and credit, and I hope you do not doubt my being so for yours, one is too

much alarm'd to be wise: forgive me therefore for the sake of the motive. I know you are the person in the world who would be least sensible of the presumption of my advising Mr. West.

I did not understand your charitable and kind admonitions in my affliction, as censures, any farther than as you must always blame what is wrong in itself. Your arguments of consolation are the best that can be used, and I have often read them, and shall keep them in my memory, and also in my cabinet, that if, in the short period of my remaining life, there should new afflictions befall me, I may have timely recourse to them. I thank God most of my friends are more likely by the superior strength of their constitutions to survive than to depart before me; indeed I cannot say so of my poor Lydia, for whom I live in daily anxiety. I have not heard from her this week, but I hope her silence is rather owing to Dr. Shaw's prohibition of writing than to any extraordinary indisposition; the last account she gave of herself, was a good one.

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, 21st January, 1753.*

My most honoured Cousin,

I AM much obliged to you for your letter, and the good wish at the end of it, which according to Mr. Locke, I may understand to imply no less than that I may neither be sick nor be mad; I will promise you

never to be the first by intemperance, nor the second by pride and impatience; so far is right, the rest we leave to Heaven. I cannot think that you have lately studied the map of England, otherwise you would not consider Sandleford as a place so remote; it is certain that it is not so near London as Wickham is, and that we cannot receive so frequent visits from those we like, nor so short ones from persons we do not. The rules of civility and hospitality regulate our intercourse with our neighbours, rather than choice. As to our fireside, it is under the protection of that serious goddess of dullness, who passes in all the country firesides in England, for the true Minerva, though in truth she does rather resemble her owl; however, the place may reasonably please any person who is fond of retirement, and does not affect appearing in the *beau-monde*. For my part, I cannot agree with you, in such contempt of that pretty monster the *beau-monde*, but I know no better proof of that health of the mind you wish me, than the preferring what I ought, to what I like, to do; and indeed I had a free choice, and it has been offer'd to me to return to London whenever I pleased. Did I but know the abode of rosy health, I would repair thither. I have diligently sought the charming goddess, but she flies from my pursuit, and I must content myself with the society of her best substitute, patience. I approve much of Mrs. West's metamorphosis of London nymphs into those weeds called love and idleness. Ovid himself could not have done better for them, but still I hope you will both leave so much of your wisdom at Wickham, as would be inconvenient in town. I think there is but one



way by which you can either of you avoid pleasing in any society, and that is by not being pleased in it; that I own to be an infallible method. If Mrs. West was to be obliged to appear with pompons in her cap, and your worship under like necessity to wear a toupet, I should pity you both, but good sense and merit are agreeable to all modes, and take well in every soil and climate, though people are apt to imagine that they belong only to that region in which they happen to live. I believe seven years residence in London would confirm one in an opinion that no humane arts or conversation reach beyond Knightsbridge. The same number of idle summers and dull winters pass'd in the country would make one pronounce every thing in town to be idle, frivolous, and vain. One ought not to contract a local character: it imposes on no one but ones self, however happily united with the place it never passes for a perfect and complete one. It may be difficult for the vain and the gay to find their proper pleasures in the country, but I know no talents or virtues that may not find employment and gratifications in a great city. The beau-monde will pay you respect for not imitating their follies, a compliment with which they reward the complaisance of their own set only when they excel in the arts they profess. Philosophic pride treads the stage with more comic effect than social complacency. The first or second of February I shall return to London without the least concern about the figure I shall make there, most happily trusting that I shall not make any figure at all. Naturalists have taken pains to class the different kinds of plants and animals, but moralists have left three

parts of mankind without any particular character, and they are at liberty to add themselves to a gay assembly, a philosophical lecture, be present at a reasonable conversation, or go with the crowd to see Harlequin in a bottle. Happy the animal that can live in all elements, though it dignifies, or is dignified by none ! When Mr. Garrick is walking on tip-toe on the stage, raising his voice to the highest key, yet still observing its harmony, studying the grace of every attitude and propriety of every gesture, is he, though the object of admiration, half as happy as the unheeded spectator, who sits lolling on his elbows in the pit ? but this, like some other salutary truths, is hid from the mighty and the wise, and revealed to the weak and the simple ; else would there have been no Garricks, nor the heroes they represent, neither the catastrophe nor dramatic poem, nor tragedian, nor any thing of " what in any age ennobled hath the buskin'd stage," or filled the theatre of the world with rumor. I could wish Mr. Pitt some of this happy insignificancy I have been boasting of, that he might pass this winter in a warmer climate. The rigours of this winter are insupportable. My little cousin's behaviour at Oxford must please you extremely, and with a heart that truly sympathises in all your sentiments, I congratulate you upon it. I suppose he has received Rollin's history, which I sent before I left London. I did not presume to give my advice, or perhaps I should have recommended Sir Walter Raleigh's history, rather than Rollin's: they are both addicted to making reflections, but there is great difference in the judgment of an experienced chief and statesman on the affairs of war or policy,

and those made by a speculative scavant, who writes by his fireside. I am sorry your son has so soon lost his friend, the Bishop of Cloyne.\* I had just been reading some of his pieces lately published, when I took up the newspapers that mentioned his death; such an event is apt to make one consider what people have done in their lives as an insubstantial vision, but the works I had been reading of his are of that incorruptible nature that is laid up in heaven.

My poor Lydia, thank God, is better, and the babes are getting quite well. You speak of having been visited by the gout, which I am sorry to hear, and may health and all the articles of which happiness is composed, attend you. However indifferently I may esteem my letters at the time I am writing them, I value them highly when they procure me one from you. I am rather better than I was, but not in pride of health or gayety of spirits.

I am  
my inestimable Cousin's  
• most faithful, most affectionate friend,  
and obliged humble servant,

ELIZ. MONTAGU.

\* Dr. Berkeley.

*To Mrs. Montagu, from Gilbert West, Esq.*

*Tunbridge Wells, 27th May, 1753.*

My dearest Cousin! my best and most valuable Friend,

YOUR kind letter, which I received upon my coming from chapel, is the most agreeable thing I have met with at Tunbridge, where we arrived last night about seven. It came very seasonably to relieve my spirits, which are much sunk, by the extreme dejection which appears to day in Mr. Pitt, from a night passed entirely without sleep, notwithstanding all the precautions which were taken within doors to make it still and quiet, and the accidental tranquillity, arising from the present emptiness and desolation of this place, to which no other invalids besides ourselves are yet arrived, or even expected to arrive, as yet. He began to drink the waters to day, but as they are sometimes very slow in their operations, I much fear both he, and those friends who cannot help sympathising with him, will suffer a great deal, before the wished for effect will take place; for this *insomnium*, his physicians have prescribed opiates, a medicine, which in this case, though they may procure a temporary ease, yet often recoil upon the spirits. I think his physicians have been to blame in giving all their attention to the disorder in his bowels, and not sufficiently regarding the distemperature of his spirits, a disease, much more to be apprehended than the other; while he continues under this oppression, I am afraid it will be impossible for me to leave him, as

he fancies me of the utmost use to him, as a friend and a comforter ; but I hope in God he will soon find some alteration for the better, of which I shall be glad to give you the earliest information. In the mean time, I beg you will take care of your health, and as the most effectual means of establishing it, I most earnestly desire you will follow Mr. Montagu's exhortations to repair forthwith to Tunbridge ; as by so doing, you will not only contribute to the regaining your own health and spirits, but to the comfort and felicity of some here, who love and admire you much, especially one, who values himself much upon the title of your friend, and merits it equally by the great esteem and affection which he has for you. Mr. Pitt expressed a due sense of your goodness in inquiring so particularly after him ; and that you may know how high you stand in his opinion, I must inform you, that in a conversation with Molly, he pronounced you the most *perfect woman* he ever met with. I am with the utmost sincerity and the highest regard, my dearest Cousin's

most affectionate friend,

and obliged humble servant,

GIL. WEST.

*To her Husband.*

*The 8th, 1753.*

MY DEAREST,

I AM much obliged to you for your letter from Doncaster, as it has allayed my fears on account of the hazards of a journey, to find you have performed so

much of it happily. I reckon with impatience every day of absence from so dear and good a friend ; nothing could keep me in tolerable humour during this separation, but the daily progress I make towards better health ; the only blessing I want, and which, though you cannot absolutely bestow it on me, yet you furnish me with means and opportunity of gaining it. It has been much the turn of the society I am in, to go out in parties to see places, and last post day we resolved upon an expedition of this sort, with such precipitation, I had not opportunity to write without keeping all the company waiting. We went to see an old seat of a Mr. Brown's ; it is well situated, was built by Inigo Jones, has some fine portraits, none of which delighted me so much, as one by a great hand, of an old woman of above fourscore, great, great grandam to the present possessor : the health and vivacity of the complexion, and the happy serenity of the countenance, expressing the gay conscience of a life well spent, were highly pleasing : her grandson, painted by Vandyck, is in the same piece ; he has the amiable grace of infancy, and a countenance void of care, as is usual to children ; but it does not express the heart-felt joy, the sober certainty of waking bliss, which is signified in the old lady's, who, I find, is held in veneration by her descendants. The house is furnished with the good woman's work ; I dare say her pleasures were all of the domestic kind, her dairy and poultry her care, her garden her amusement ; perhaps to know no more, is woman's highest honour and her praise, and more in our proper character than the cabal and intrigue of state, in which the French ladies place their happiness and glory. We went from this

venerable seat, to a place called New Vauxhall, where Mr. Pitt had provided us a good dinner; the view from it is romantic; we staid there till the cool of the evening, and then returned home. We drank tea yesterday in the most beautiful rural scene that can be imagined, which Mr. Pitt had discovered in his morning's ride, about half a mile from hence; he ordered a tent to be pitched, tea to be prepared, and his French horn to breathe music like the unseen genius of the wood. The company dined with me; and we set out, number eight. After tea we rambled about for an hour, seeing several views, some wild as Salvator Rosa, others placid, and with the setting sun, worthy of Claude Lorrain. These parties are good for health and pleasure, and break the dull line of a Tunbridge life. Sir George Lyttelton and Mr. Bowers are come to spend a few days with Mr. Pitt.

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*June the 13th, 1753.*

MY DEAREST,

I CAN with pleasure assure you, the waters have hitherto done as well as I could wish, my cough is much abated, and my appetite increased; this return of health will give me double pleasure, as I know it will add to your happiness. I have a constant invitation to dinner at the white stone house; Mr. Pitt is too ill to dine

abroad, and the Wests cannot leave him; so, as often as I am disposed for company, I dine there; the rest of my time passes in taking air and exercise, and now and then the relief of a book. I have chiefly applied myself to Davila's History of the Civil Wars of France; his language is clear, majestic, and noble, his reflections are fine, and the characters drawn in a masterly manner; he is reckoned a partial historian, too favourable to Catherine de Medicis, his country woman, and too much prejudiced against the Huguenots; certainly it is almost impossible to find an impartial and knowing historian. Such only can speak with any certainty of councils, who have been privy to them, and of actions, who have been present at them, and from persons thus engaged, can one expect impartiality? The monk in his cell, and the student in his college, may be impartial, but they are unknowing too. The good that happens in this world, is oftener brought about by the balance of vices, than operation of virtues, and thus the vanity of the historian is a check to his other passions, he must give a pretty faithful account, or he will fall into disesteem, and he must betray the councils, to shew his intimate acquaintance with them. Sully does not discover so much of Catharine's dissimulation as Davila; one, indeed, calls that prudence, which the other terms base hypocrisy. But one does not want the historian to fix the term, one can do that for ones self. Every page of Davila is big with events; the mind has no time to languish, one is rather hurried from one great event to another; as soon as that infant warrior, that Mars in swathing clothes, (as Shakspeare calls Hotspur,);



Henry of Navarre comes forth, one is awake and attentive wherever he appears, knowing how great a figure he will make in his maturer age. As a woman too, I have some pleasure in observing, that Henry the IVth seems to have owed his native fire, and the improvement of it, to his mother; she had not the satisfaction of seeing him placed on the throne of France, which would have given great pleasure to her ambitious spirit; but she was so fierce an Huguenot, I know not whether she would have approved the means he took to get into quiet possession of it. However, she died before the massacre of St. Bartholomew, perhaps by the contrivance of the same spirit which brought about that horrid night, the blackest perhaps in the annals of time. I am under concern that you have not heard from me, as you may be alarmed about my health, which indeed has been uninterrupted, and such, that when I consider the poor condition in which I came hither, it amazes me. I thought myself gently sinking into the grave, distant perhaps, a year or two; but apparently on my journey thither, so much were my spirits and strength decayed, and, as Samson describes his case, nature in all her functions weary of herself; but I sleep and eat heartily, have great vigour of spirits, and really seem to myself, as if some magic operation had been wrought upon me; and I find my disorder has been all a mere nervous mimicry of disease. I cannot say but it counterfeited well, but I do not design to be imposed upon, so as to give such faith to it as I did before I came hither this year. May health and happi-

ness, attend on all your footsteps! such are my hourly wishes.

I am, my Dearest,  
Your most faithful  
and affectionate wife,  
E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

1753.

MY DEAREST,

I HAVE more thanks to return to you for your kind and generous attention to my health, than I can express. I am drinking the waters with all diligence, and they agree perfectly. Mr. Pitt, Mr. West, and his son, and Miss West, and the Dean of Exeter,\* are going a tour to Maidstone, Canterbury, and Dover; they design to see all the seats, parks, castles on the sea side, and other things worthy of notice: Mr. Pitt thinks the waters more beneficial after these intermissions, but as this place is dull, he gives his days of leisure to the amusement of seeing places. I expect a very exact account of the things they have seen: Mr. Pitt has a correct taste, Mr. West a poetical imagination, and the Dean a love of antiquities, so amongst them one may learn the particulars of all the places they have visited. So various are the minds of men that the same object does not exist in the same manner in any two heads; so it is of faces, all see the same features, but our opin-

\* Dr. Lyttelton, afterwards Bishop of Carlisle.

ions of the countenance are different. As the world is furnished with variety, and life made up of it, I know not whether those persons who have some tincture of, and a little acquaintance with, all kinds of knowledge have not more pleasure than such as confine themselves to one branch, though certainly man's life and powers are so limited, a person cannot be master of more than one art or science; even painting or music have more in them than the life of man can exhaust. However, this is a question that will bear much argument, for though Providence, to excite man to the pursuit of knowledge, has strew'd pleasures like flowers on the surface; delight and sure satisfaction, like the ore and gem, are buried in the mine, and can thence be brought only by labour, time, and strong application.

All the family at the Stone-house, and myself in their train, went yesterday to Penhurst, and spent a good deal of time in viewing the pictures. I was most pleased with the portraits, as I know not any family that for arts and arms, greatness of courage, and nobility of mind, have excelled the Sidney race. Beauty too has been remarkable in it; they have adorned the Historian's and the Poet's page, but alas, all things change, and I fear that for the future, their highest renown will arise from some paragraph in the newspaper, that bestows on them beauty, wit, and fine accomplishments. We drove about the Park for some time admired the fine scenes, and revered the shades where Sir Philip, and Algernon Sidney had pursued their meditations, and Waller touched his gentle lyre.

We went from the Park to an inn at Penshurst to dinner,  
and returned home in the evening.

I am, my dearest,  
Your most truly affectionate,  
and faithful Wife,

E. M.

---

*To Gilbert West, Esq.*

*Sandleford, 27th September, 1753.*

MY MOST HONOURED COUSIN,

YOUR kind and agreeable letter restored me in some measure to the temper I lost at going out of town the very day you came to it. I know not what poets may find in the country when they have filled the woods with sylvan deities, and the rivers with naiades; but to me, groves, and streams, and plains, make poor amends for the loss of a friend's conversation. You have better supplied Mr. Pitt's absence by reading the orations of his predecessor, Demosthenes, and I can easily imagine you would rather have passed the evening with the British, than the Grecian Demosthenes, whom in talents, perhaps, he equals, and in grace of manners and the sweet civilities of life, I dare say, excels. But when you seem to say you would even have preferred the simple small-talk of your poor Cousin to the Athenian orator, I cry out, Oh, wonderful power of friendship! which, like the sun, gives glorious colours to a vapour, and brightens the pebble to a gem, till what would have been neglected by the common herd, is accepted by the most distinguished; thus has your

partiality done by me, and having made me your companion and your friend, you at last begin to think I have a right to be so, and as I am in danger of thinking so too, I beg of you not to change your opinion after I have adopted it. On Tuesday morning about eight o'clock, I call'd upon Mr. Hooke at his hermitage; I found him, like a true savant, surrounded by all the elements of science, but though I looked round the room, I could not perceive any signs of the author, no papers, pen, ink, or sheets just come from the press. I fear the fine ladies and fine prospects of Cookham divert his attention from the Roman History. I desired him to carry me to Mrs. Edwin's, which I heard was a very pretty place, and indeed I do not wonder if the Thames, which plays so prettily round the garden, should make Mr. Hooke forget the Tiber; and there is an old ferry woman, who crosses the Thames very often before Mrs. Edwin's terrace, whom, from acquaintance and friendship, he may prefer to the valiant Clelia, long so famed in story, as you do the impertinent *caquet* of your cousin to the rhetoric of former times; such advantage have present objects, and happy it is so, or the majesty of the antique world might awe the spirits of the puny modern, and action be lost in contemplation. Mr. Hooke made earnest enquiry after you, and I said for you to him, what I thought equivalent to the regard he expressed for you. While we were in Mrs. Edwin's garden, he betrayed my name to her; my face was well disguised with a pair of spectacles, but on his information, she came down, shew'd me her house, and the pictures, which are very fine, but the views from her windows gave one no leisure to consider the works

of art. I shall not endeavour to describe the place to you, as I understand you were there last year to visit Mrs. Stanley, who lives at the edge of the garden. I know not whether the freshness of the morning, a small degree of mistiness in the air, which soften'd the near objects, and the sun obliquely falling upon parts of the wood, did not give it at that time a more than ordinary beauty ; but I must own I was never so pleased with any situation on the Thames, its banks being usually flat and naked ; these are finely wooded, and rise in variety of eminences. Cliefden Hill rises majestically in view, and the only flat shore you see from this place, lies straight before it, and is a large plain of the finest verdure, and full of cattle. Many little islands diversify the scene, and the boats continually passing, give life to the picture. This gentle sort of navigation does not take off from the pastoral air of the place ; stately vessels are noble objects, but with Bellona's thunder in their sides, they destroy the peace and simplicity of a scene. I will own that the river here, does not appear in such force and magnificence as near Greenwich, but where it gently glides through humble vallies, or fertilizes a little plain, it still keeps a character of nobility. Father Thames in a little valley, has the dignity of a great chief and statesman in retreat : we remember the invincible fleets he has sent forth, the commercial benefits he has procured to his country, the useful arts he has assisted, and the advantageous alliances he has made, uniting his city with every land from whence it can acquire benefit. I need not tell you that I often wish myself on Mount Ephraim ; but as there is pain in fruitless wishes, and my ignoble soul

is much afraid of pain, I endeavour to convert all memory of the past into a pleasing thankfulness for happiness enjoyed; but though, as Dr. Middleton was my godfather, you may suppose I have read his Evangelist with great veneration, I cannot find much solid comfort in a doctrine without promise. The remembrance of a well spent life, were all to cease here, is indeed a satisfaction; the pride of a stoic may blow it up very high, especially when he has added the immortality of a name, and while he considers the perishable state of his own nature can proudly add,

But fame with golden wings aloft doth fly,  
Above the reach of ruinous decay,  
And with brave plumes doth beat the azure sky,  
Admir'd by base born men from far away.

Such are the comforts of the budge doctors of the stoic fur, but what are they to a lady in a blonde cap? I am looking forward to future summers, and when most serious, to the eternal summer. I have been very well ever since I saw you, I have spent most of my time in walking and airing; a few hours for reading I have in my power, though my fair disciples hinder me a good deal;\* they have been stunning me ever since I sat down, with the achievements of the boisterous Semiramis, and the effeminate delicacy of Sardanapalus; had he kept on the helmet, and her ladyship set to the distaff, much trouble had been saved to M. Rollin, the misses, and your humble servant, and you would have had a more intelligible letter. You know I have your

\* Mrs. Montagu had the daughters of her deceased friend, Mrs. Botham, with her,

permission to trouble you with long letters, a dangerous license to one whom want of thought, does not reduce to silence, but every line I write must be considered as an *elope* of your patience and condescension; having so long dwelt on your virtues, I will now remember your talents, and detain you no longer from such employments as they will naturally lead you to, and you will pardon all my impertinence for the respect and affection with which

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*Sandleford, the 4th of October, 1753.*

MY MOST HONOURED COUSIN,

I FOUND your letter on my table last night, at my return from a sober airing on the neighbouring commons. I have kept up our Tunbridge custom, of going out for an hour or two in the afternoon, and by that means I make the hours of idleness a time of amusement, which is not always to be accomplished where one has not change of company. I know not whether I am not more fond of this custom, as it seems to bring me in some measure back to the agreeable life of Mount Ephraim. Happy should I be, if I could as easily renew all that was improving and delightful to the mind in those airings, as I can pursue what they had of healthful to the body and pleasant to the eye! Dr. Young says, wisdom grows on all plants, and in every



rill a pure instruction flows, but there wants a certain chymical art and skill to extract this sapient virtue, and I find I can get it only by the liberality of those who charitably dispense it to the poor ; you may easily believe, therefore, how much I regret the rich and charitable corporation into which I was long admitted ; such were the turn of my thoughts and tune of my disposition, when I found your letter ready to make up for all that had been deficient in my airing ; imagine then the welcome I gave to it. In my solitary musings in the coach, I had sometimes cast an eye of envy on the humble cottage, which to the beholders, if not to the inhabitants, shews the sweet aspect of content. We are apt to think their wishes have as narrow limits as their possessions, and their tempers are as uniform as their way of life ; that tranquillity must reside in minds that have never been agitated by hope or fear, awakened by solicitous cares, or refined by delicacy ; which last, is most perhaps, the enemy of human happiness. A delicate person, like a sickly traveller on an inconstant sea, suffers equally from too brisk or too languid a gale, must have fair weather, sunshine, prosperous winds and favourable tides to make the voyage pleasant ; while insensibility bears every change with equanimity, unruffled in the most boisterous storm, unwearied in the deadest calm. Thus in the wanderings of imagination, had I run over all the advantages of rustic stupidity, but when your letter presented to me pleasures which can arise only from delicacy of taste and a well awakened sensibility ; I changed my opinion, envied neither shepherd nor shepherdess, but giving due preference to the pleasures of reason and taste, I sat

down by my fireside with more than calm content, with real delight and satisfaction. The poor cottagers, who, perhaps as erroneously ascribe happiness to wealth, as we may peace to poverty, had probably envied me the ease and indolence I enjoyed in the coach, and little imagined I should receive much greater pleasure at my return, from a single sheet of paper, than I had done in an equipage, which to them, must appear a piece of pomp and luxury; so little can we judge of untasted pleasures and unexperienced sensations! and so often do we mistake the object, when we envy! I am much obliged to Mr. Cheere for his regard to me, and he applies it as I could wish, when he employs it in your service. I cannot at all suspect that he designed this adorned and high finished piece, as an emblem of your cousin; if it should resemble her, a very few winters, some cold blasts, and rough winds, will efface whatever it had originally of beauty, and you must do for it, as I have long done for myself; consider whether it can be made useful and serve some domestic purposes, when it is no longer an ornament to shew abroad. This consideration of a quondam belle, has made me a school-mistress, which office I find you highly respect, since you are so afraid to interrupt its attentions; but know, my good Cousin, that a correspondence with you can never hurt that great republic, my school, which if I would adorn with manners, and amend with rules, it must be by such as I borrow from you, for of you I must learn what I should teach. I honour and admire the wandering spirit with which you are possessed; if Mrs. West takes to gadding, I shall believe the story of Will o' the wisp. Mr. Pope mentions a sort of people who

build houses from whence to run away, sure he could not mean any of my friends! I suppose that before you laid the plan of a month's absence from Wickham, you knew Mr. Pitt would stay so long at the Bath: his departure was so sudden, perhaps you had not settled with Mr. Lyttelton, how often you should receive accounts of his health. Pray when you have any news of him, let me know how the Bath waters agree with him. I often regret that the Tunbridge waters did not prove as serviceable to him as they have been to me: may the Bath restore him to perfect health for his own sake, that of his friends and the public. You know my respects always attend my Lord Bishop and Mrs. Sherlock, and Miss Chester.

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Saturday, the 13th of October, 1753.*

MY MOST HONOURED COUSIN,

YOUR letter met me last night at my return from airing. I had been gliding about the commons by the pale light of the silent moon, conversing with the spirits of my absent friends whom I hoped were all in health, and engaged in scenes more gay than woods, hills, and vallies veil'd in night, or faintly illuminated by a weak and trembling ray. My moonlight excursions prove that love of dull tranquillity which you despise me for, but I assure you they are very pleasant

to me, who am seldom displeased when impertinent or disagreeable objects do not intrude. My mind, like a healthful climate, breeds no plagues; if any come there, they must be imported: I love to see the night gathering all nature's children under its wing; the very zephyrs seem to respect the universal peace and rest, and all things whisper tranquillity, and I am glad to catch the tone. After my airings, I drink tea, then retire to my dressing room for two or three hours with companions, whom superior parts and noble ambition led from the silent path of life to its busiest and most turbulent scenes; if I can get some of their experience without any of their dangers, and a little of their knowledge without any of their passions, I may keep my tranquillity without falling into that stupidity and insensibility which I think still more unworthy of the human mind than vain solicitude, and idle perturbation. I know it is the custom to answer all letters by the gross, without condescending to take notice of any enquiry or question, so I will, in most glaring capitals, that it may not again be unanswered, desire **TO KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD CONCERNING MR. PITT'S HEALTH**; you certainly must have heard of him, and I think, you know a good account of him would be very welcome, so I am apprehensive he is not so well as I could wish, but I shall be very glad to part with an unpleasing error; if it be an error, pray contradict me. Mr. Botham and his pretty little boy are here. You will probably receive a letter I sent to Lillingstone; however, should it be lost, you need not repine at it, as you may have as many as you please out of the same mint, so plenty are all things which

bear no value. My best, sincerest, and continual wishes ever attend you,

I am,  
my most honoured Cousin,  
your most obliged and most affectionate  
and faithful,  
ELIZA MONTAGU.

*To the Same.*

*the 25th.*

MY HONOURED COUSIN,

YOU grow so adventurous and bold in taking journeys, that I begin to apprehend you would step into the rapid car of Phœbus if it was offer'd you, "gallop apace the fiery-footed steeds" and travel round the globe in four and twenty hours. Sedentary, solitary, lazy and dull, how unworthy am I of your correspondence! Let my way of life be some excuse for me; remember there is more of vigour, strength, and skill required to dance on the slack, than the tight rope. Descartes, to overcome the *vis inertię*, and keep the planet rolling in its sphere, was forced to whirl it in a vortex. I am not carried about by the current of the world, but left on a desert shore, where my mind rests in absolute dulness. You must expect nothing from me but to have the gold you send me changed into silver; increased indeed in weight and bulk, but debased in purity and worth. I do not find that even the scenes of Bulstrode, though they bring back to my mind the cheerful days of youth, bring back the vivacity of that happy season. I believe

the menagerie at Bulstrode is exceedingly well worth seeing, for the Dutchess of Portland is as eager in collecting animals, as if she foresaw another deluge, and was assembling every creature after its kind, to preserve the species : she used to be very happy in a great variety of fowls, which is a very fortunate taste, for any one who is much in the country, for they have nothing to do, but to throw down a handful of corn, and cry, biddy, biddy, and behold their friends assemble round them in an instant ! while I, who care for none of the winged race, but your Theban swan, walk alone, musing on absent friends, and pleasures past and gone. As to the persons and places you mention, though, perhaps improved since I saw them, I think they cannot have any extraordinary beauty. Nature must furnish her quota, to make persons or places great and elegant. The elegant spectator of forms, will prefer the fair shepherdess with a garland of roses on her head, to the homely royal dame with her diadem of gold. I think you will prefer Mrs. Edwin's little territory, to all the pomp of ———. I am glad you propose to call again on Mr. Hooke. I desire that you will give me an account of all your pleasures, as I take a part in them, and I am willing to accompany you in all your travels. I suppose you have been at Stowe, where Art has exhausted all her powers,

*E quel, che il bello, o il caro accresce all' opre.  
E' arte, che tutto fa, nulla si scopre.*

Such, I am told, is its present state ; when I saw the gardens they brought not so much to one's imagination the scenes of paradise, as of that garden, “ where the

asapient king with his fair spouse held dalliance;" it was rather a retreat for the proud and luxurious, than the philosophic mind; like the poets, it was an Elysian only for heroes; ambition found examples there, and restless emulation fair incitements, but no quiet scenes hushed the passions into peace, and excluded the visions of this world's vanities; which, I take to be the great benefit of rural retreat, which should give the mind into the guardian care, of "the cherub Contemplation." I am afraid that Mr. Bowers will loose all the pleasure he had promised himself from the neighbourhood of Wickham; he speaks with great regret of your leaving Wickham, and of having seen so little of you, when you was there. I have had the pleasure of receiving several letters from him; he is a charming correspondent, which, added to being a good companion when present, makes him a very desirable friend. Mr. Botham leaves us tomorrow, but he is to leave his little boy with me, as a pledge of his return. I am greatly delighted with the little gentleman; he has the happiest disposition I ever saw, a mind and body disposed to health, and in neither any ill humours. Sometimes, when he bestows a great many of his little endearments and caresses on me, he brings to my mind his fond mother, who would have received them with infinite delight, but Heaven knew best.—I consider these little creatures as messengers she sends to me, to keep up the intercourse of friendship, till we meet to part no more.

I am,  
 my dearest Cousin's  
 most faithful, and affectionate friend,  
 E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.**Sandleford, the 3d of September.*

I AM much obliged to my dear cousin, for his kind and agreeable letter, which gave me a higher pleasure and more intense delight, than those rural objects which employed my attention in my walks, or filled the magic lantern of my mind, in those noonday dreams, you suppose to have amused me. You are mistaken, when you imagine I send invitations to beaux and belles, to fill the vacant apartments of my mind. True indeed, that there may be empty space enough to receive French hoops, and, from the same reason, an echo to repeat French sentiments; but there are few of the fine world whom I should invite into my mind, and fewer still, who are familiar enough there, to come unasked. I make use of these seasons of retirement and leisure, to do like the good housewives, to sweep the rooms, range the little homely furniture in order, and deck them with a little sage and other herbs of grace, as they are called, and then hope the fairies will come and visit them, and not the dull creatures of earth's mould, of whom I have enough when I am in town. But you are a welcome and a frequent guest, because you bring with you those virtues and graces, whose presence I would desire. I am pleased with your praise of Moliere, but not with your application of his Misanthrope. When virtue and wisdom live out of the world, they grow delicate, but it is too severe to call that moroseness; and, perhaps, they lose something of



their purity, when they mix with the crowd, and abate in strength, as they improve in flexibility. There is a limit, and a short one too, beyond which human virtue cannot go ; a hair's breadth beyond the line, and it is vice. I am now satisfied of what I had before believed, (as you seem so much to admire the *Misanthrope*,) that it is far beyond all comedies that ever were written. The character being so entirely kept up, and the error, though every where visible, no where monstrous. The *Misanthrope* has the same moroseness in his love suit and his law suit ; he is as rigid and severe to a bad verse as a bad action, and as strict in a salutation in the street or address in a drawing room, as he would be in his testimony in a court of justice ; right in the principle, wrong only in the excess, you cannot hate him when he is unpleasant, nor despise him when he is absurd. When the ground-work of a character is virtuous, whatever fantastic forms or uncouth figures may be wrought upon it, it cannot appear absolutely odious or ridiculous. On the contrary, where the ground is vicious, however prettily adorned or gayly coloured, set it in open day, it will be detestable ; of which we have an instance in this play ; we hate and despise the lively agreeable coquette, as soon as we discover her, and esteem the rigid unamiable *Misanthrope*. I think my young cousin can hardly have a better amusement than reading *Moliere* ; from whose delicate wit and nice satirical touch, he will find that not only the worst passions want correction and restraint, but the best regulation. The first prayer I should make, if I had a son, would be that he might be free from vice ; the second, that he might be free from absurdity, the least grain of

it spoils a whole character, and I do not know any comic author more useful than Molière, for both these purposes. Our English play writers give some vice or affectation, to all their principal characters. I am very well, and careful of my health; all people are fond of novelty and you know health is such to me, but nothing can more recommend it to me, than thinking my welfare of consequence to you. Adieu, Cousin! I must put on a great hoop, and go three miles to dinner; how much better was our gipsy life! I believe I shall enter myself of the society at Norwood, the rather tempted to it, as I should be your neighbour. I have not heard from Mrs. Boscawen, but I am glad she had the pleasure of spending some time at Wickham.

I am, &c. &c.

ELIZ. MONTAGU.

---

*To the Same.*

*Hill-street, Thursday.*

MY DEAREST COUSIN,

I CANNOT expect to hear from you while you have such agreeable company with you; I find it is difficult to steal an hour from the embarrassments of society, but it is much more so from the agreeable engagements of friendly intercourse. You are making a full meal at the feast of reason, I am running from house to house, getting the cold scraps of visiting conversation, served up with the indelicacy and indifference of an ordinary, at which no power of the mind does the honours; the

particular taste of each guest is not consulted, the solid part of the entertainment is too gross for a delicate taste and the lighter fare insipid: I passed Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, in visiting fine ladies, all of a new and extraordinary turn, but I was not much entertained; each differed from every other person in the world, but each is at all times like herself, I mean in the tone of conversation; the reverse of Mr. Pope's celebrated dame to whom he gives, "fixed principles with fancy ever new;" a praise that ever appeared to me the highest that could be given to the companion and the friend, but by fine ladies it is reversed. Indeed, Cousin, I do not love fine ladies, but I am to dine with \* \* \* to-morrow notwithstanding; she has a fund of honour and honesty, that make a good ground work of a character; there are indeed some grotesque figures embroidered upon it, that caprice and fashion have wrought there, but time may wear them out, and the skilful hand of a prudent friend may help to do it; and then much will remain that is really good. There are strong characters, which, like strong wines, ferment a great while before they grow clear, but when once the dregs are thrown off they admirably bear the change of seasons, and are found cordial to those that take them. I know you are not inclined to like \* \* \* which perhaps induced me to trouble you with all this impertinence upon, may I say, an impertinent subject? Pray make my compliments to Mrs. and Miss West, Sir George Lyttelton, and my Cousin.

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.

*To the Same.**Hill Street, Wednesday, 16, 1754.***My most inestimable Cousin,**

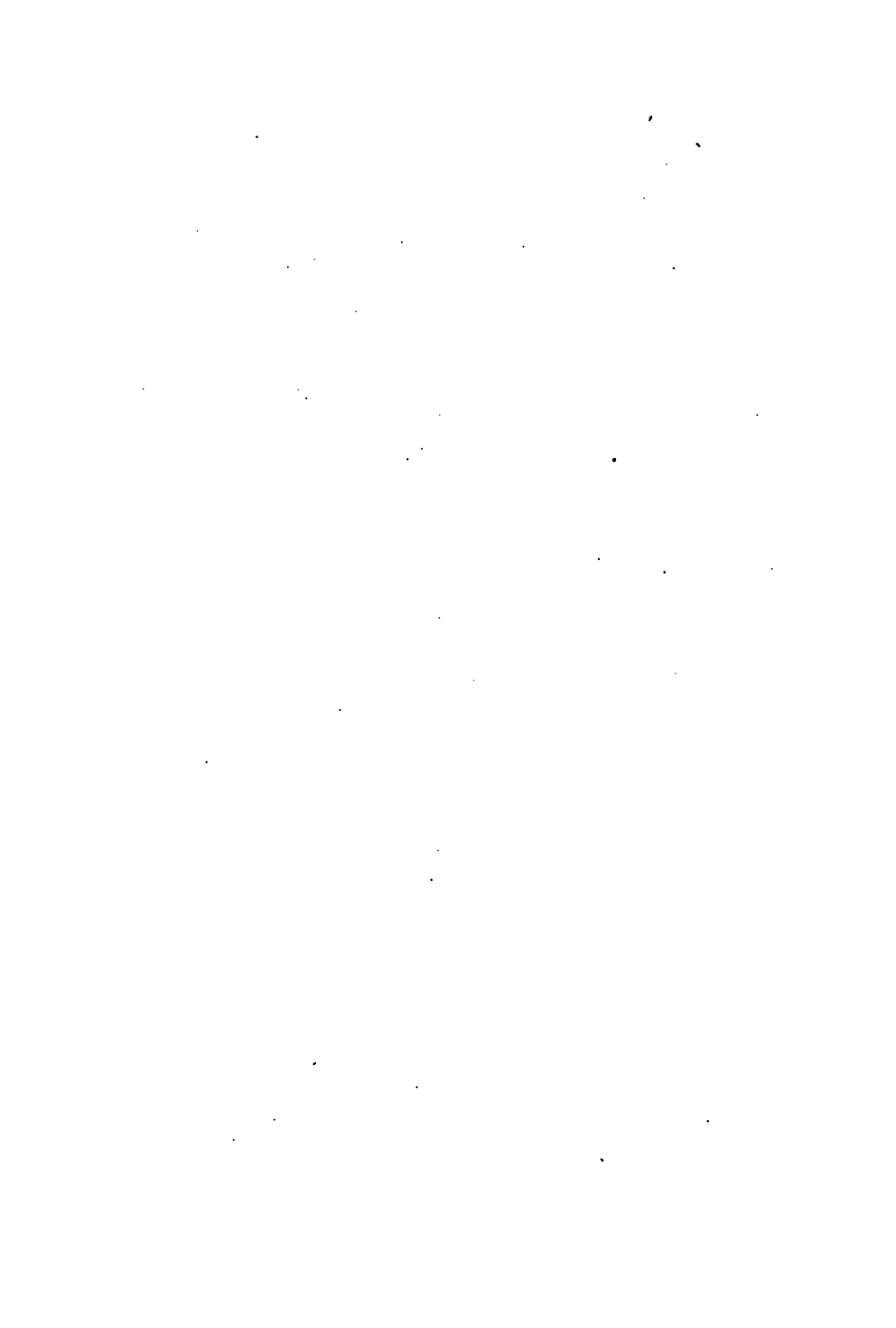
I AM much more satisfied now I find that your indisposition was owing to the rencontre of salt fish, milk, and a strange olio of diet, than when I imagined it was the gout in your stomach. But pity, which sometimes subsides into soft passions, on this occasion warms and hardens into anger. Why, when an invalid, would you be so careless of your diet? However difficult it may be to the strong temper of the budge doctors of the stoic fur, to run mad with discretion,\* I assure you it is not impossible to the gentle dame in blonde lace and Paris hoop; I followed the precepts of the très-précieuse Lady Grace, and visited "soberly." I have not been out since Sunday, Mr. Montagu's cold having given me a reason for staying at home, and my indolence would have been glad even of an excuse. I did not see Sir George Lyttelton till yesterday morning, but the account he gave of your health pleased me very much. The good Dean called in the evening, and unfolded to me the horrid tale of the salt-fish and asses milk. Oh, could the milky mother, who is so often insulted, so much despised and oppressed by man, have known his perverseness of appetite would have turned her salutary milk, the effect of prudent and fit diet, into a kind of poison; how would she have animadverted upon the occasion? I dare say she would have made better observations on the different powers of reason and instinct than have been made by any philosopher on two legs. I wish I had her critique upon human

\* Insanire certâ ratione modoque. Horace.

reason, in black and white, with her modest apology for long ears and walking on four legs. I have just received Mr. Bower's third volume of the Popes, with so polite an Italian epistle, as shews he can play what note he pleases on Apollo's harp. I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Berenger on Monday morning, he has been under discipline for his eyes, but his spirits and vivacity are not abated. Pray has Mr. Birch sent you his Queen Elizabeth? I have not seen it, and I know I shall read it with sorrow. A belle passion at three-score is worse than eating salt fish in the gout. I shall hate these collectors of anecdotes if they cure one of that admiration of a great character that arises from a pleasing deception of sight. I desire you not to read aloud this part of Queen Bess's story, when the ass is at your door; it would make a bad chapter for us in her history of human reason, 60 odd to twenty-one! instinct never made such a blunder. An old woman and a young man, a sin against nature, an old queen and a young counsellor, a sin against politics and prudence. "Ambition should be made of sterner stuff." I shall begin to believe Madame Scudery's romances, in which Lucretia is adroit at intrigue, the stern Brutus a whining lover, and Cato the censor admirable at writing the billet doux. I cannot forgive Mr. Birch for bringing this story to light in such a {manner; I suppose with Shakspeare, that, in spite of Cupid's idle darts, "she pass'd on in maiden meditation fancy free." I should have written to you before if I had not been in hopes Mr. Montagu's cold would have given me some room to flatter myself with a visit to Wickham.

I am, &c. &c.

E. MONTAGU.













3 2044 020 016 374

**THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED  
AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS  
NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON  
OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED  
BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE  
NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE  
BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.**

**Harvard College Widener Library  
Cambridge, MA 02138 (617) 495-2413**

